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THE MEMOIRS OF Miſs D'Arville; OR THE Italian Female Philoſopher: IN A SERIES OF ADVENTURES FOUNDED ON FACT.

Tranſlated from the ITALIAN, by CARLI BRESCIANO, Secretary to his Serene Highneſs the Duke of Modena.

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THE

MEMOIRS

OF

Mlle. D'Arville,

A YOUNG

Italian French Fiddle-player.

IN SEVERAL

ADVENTURES.

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THE MEMOIRS OF Miſs *D'Arville*.

CHAP. I.

My Journey to Rome, and Diſcovery made by Mr. Duli's Wife of my Parents.

ON my arrival at Rome, I was recommended to a lodging in the houſe of Madam Galanti, ſuppoſed to be a widow with a numerous family of children. When I firſt entered the houſe, ſhe ſeemed ſurpriſed; but this did not create in me the leaſt ſuſpicion of any particular motives for it, as I knew well that a woman dreſſed like a man, if ſhe was tolerably handſome, muſt appear

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in that disguise, rather more than commonly agreeable. She took care to attend me with great assiduity; but, whenever she came into my presence, she seemed desirous of saying something, but the fear of offending prevented her speech. As she seemed to be a woman of great prudence, I one day took the opportunity to ask her, if she had any husband living? Ah! Sir, said she, with tears in her eyes, if he was living I should not be subject to these difficulties to maintain my family: I had the happiness to be married to an honest worthy man, by trade a timber-merchant; about twelve years ago he went from Venice to Leghorn, and taking with him a considerable sum to trade with, was certainly murdered on the road, for from that time to this I have never heard of him. At these words the tears flowed from her eyes, and I, to my great astonishment, was convinced that I must be in the house, and talking to the wife of Duli, the merchant whom I had met with on my way to Paris. I could scarcely avoid through pity to inform her that her husband was still alive, and trading in France under another name; reflecting, however, upon the circumstance

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of the Princeſs, who, as Duli had informed me, was brought to bed in his houſe, and comparing with this the confuſed account of Madam Cafardo, I judged it would be proper to proceed with caution, and uſed my beſt endeavours to comfort her; after which, pretending to be looking over the things in my little box, I pulled out the Ducheſs's picture, and laid it upon the table in ſuch a manner that ſhe could not avoid ſeeing it. This contrivance anſwered my expectations; ſhe firſt looked ſtedfaſtly at the picture, then at my face with great amazement: I then aſked her the cauſe of her ſurprize? Nothing, Sir, anſwered ſhe, but I was doubting whether that was not your picture, and whether you had not in joke dreſſed yourſelf like a woman. Why, ſaid I, does it reſemble me? It reſembles you ſo much, replied ſhe, that I would inſiſt upon it to be yours, if I did not know the original. It is, ſaid I, my mother's, but you could not know her. If your mother was the Ducheſs of ****, replied ſhe, I knew her before you; and as I believe you to be a gentleman of honour, may venture to inform you that the Ducheſs was brought to bed in my houſe, ſome

years ago, of a ſiſter of yours in this very room, and as ſoon as I ſaw you I ſuſpected you to be her ſon, ſo ſtrongly are her features imprinted in my mind; but not being certain of it, I ſhould never have mentioned it had I not ſeen that picture in your hand. I no longer doubted of what Duli had told me; a thouſand ſentiments of confuſion, curioſity, and joy, ſprung in upon my mind; I immediately ſuppoſed myſelf to be child to the Ducheſs, and therefore thought myſelf happy; I ſuppoſed that the urgency of the Ducheſs, for me to go and get ſome news of the fugitive, ſpoke in my favour; I attributed her impatience not to her hatred againſt the Duke, her huſband, as Madam Cafardo made me believe, but to the tenderneſs of a mother; even in Madam Cafardo I found juſt reaſons for her concealing the truth in a ſecret of ſuch importance, and whatever doubt I had of being wrong in my conjectures, might eaſily be cleared up, by aſking my landlady, without running any riſk of being known: I pretended that I was no ſtranger to all which ſhe had told me; and aſked her, if ſhe knew what became of my ſiſter that was born in her houſe? My huſband, ſaid ſhe, accom-

accompanied her, at the age of four years, by the order of the Ducheſs, to a convent at Avignon, to be brought up there with her equals, ſince which time I never have heard any thing of her; I would willingly hear of her by ſending a letter to the Ducheſs, but I know that before her marriage ſhe had ſome correſpondence with the Prince of ****, and the Duke being as jealous a man as any under the heavens, too much regard I judged could not be taken in an affair which demanded the greateſt ſecreſy: in fact, inſtead of her voyage to Spain, ſhe ſtaid two months in this room, nor did even the air know it; if the ſecret had been in other hands, woe to the poor Ducheſs, but, thank God, I am a woman that can keep a ſecret, neither in ſo doing have I exceeded my duty; ſhe being a Neapolitan, I know her, I may ſay from her childhood, and ſhe would have done wrong if ſhe had not entruſted me with a matter of ſuch conſequence. While Madam Galanti was boaſting of her ſecreſy, I took care, from the begining, not to tell her any more about myſelf then what ſhe already knew; the confidence placed in us by others, ought to make us ſincere and not im-

prudent; and we ſhould never reward a ſecret repoſed in us, by making a return of mutual confidence which might be dangerous to ourſelves.

CHAP. II.

My Reſolution not to ſee Paris any more, and the Neceſſity I was under of going there.

AFTER all theſe reflections, my obligations to Madam Galanti were ſuch that I determined, in return, to give her the happy proſpect of ſeeing once more her huſband, telling her, that I had met in France with a gentleman, called by the name of Duli, whoſe country, family, and the circumſtances of his bankruptcy, induced me to believe that he was the perſon ſhe ſuppoſed to be dead; at firſt ſhe would not believe that her huſband was capable to be guilty of ſuch an action, but when I gave her a deſcription of his perſon, her ſuſpicion that it muſt be him increaſed greatly; and finally when I ſhewed her the copy of the letter which he wrote for me to Mr. D'Arcore, ſhe was fully convinced, and began to lament bitterly her misfortunes, and asked me, what it was that could poſſibly

poſſibly detain him from his family and country? I told her that it was the fear of his creditors; to which ſhe replied, that there were but a few of them to ſatisfy, and that he might return home without fear or moleſtation. Upon this I promiſed that, on my return to France, I would make diligent ſearch for him, and ſend him back to Rome. The poor woman was much comforted by my promiſes; but I was under terrible apprehenſions, leſt by her means I might be diſcovered to be ſon to the Ducheſs of * * * *, which news being known in the French camp, and even as far as Paris, might carry with it fatal conſequences; at the ſame time to unſay what I had already told her, was not acting like the man of honour; to recommend it as a ſecret, would be making her doubt of my candour; therefore I muſt let it paſs as I had firſt repreſented it, and truſt to my deſtiny; though by way of precaution, I told her, that my journey to Rome was not known by my mother, and that ſhe believed me to be in the army: whether Madam Galanti believed it or not, while I ſtayed in Rome ſhe did not mention it to any one: my intereſt, however, would not permit me to ſtay

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in Rome any longer, and the orders of the Marſhall calling me to the army before Eaſter, I, in a few days, bid adieu to my courteous landlady, and took the road to Lombardy. The more I reflected upon my journey, the more I found myſelf perplexed; I knew, and was certain, that the Ducheſs of * * * * was my mother, and my father the Prince of * * * *, already my protector, but knew not how to own him, I being the fruit of unlawful nuptials; I ought to believe that the giving of me life ſhould make them bluſh; I looked on myſelf accountable for the cauſe which had conducted me to be the innocent ſpectator of my mother's amours with my father, which to me, more than to another, might have turned out dangerous, and were fatal even from the cradle; and I ought to remember, that eternal Providence, that permitted the Duke to ſeek my death by various means; yet would not have me, for juſt reaſons, to be the victim of his revenge.

As long as the Duke lived, I muſt not hope from him, nor from my parents, better treatment; knowing then more of myſelf than themſelves, I ought to keep from Paris that I might not

not be in continual danger, ſuperior to my ability from prudence and nature. Adieu, Paris, ſaid I, who knows when I ſhall ſee you again? and who can tell me, whether, in my preſent ſituation, it behoves me to repine at my deſtiny? Theſe reflections accompanied me on my journey to Milan, nor would they, day or night, give me any repoſe: the occupations of the campaign in no ſhape lightened my afflictions, but rather increaſed them; I always wiſhed for a ſecond battle, in which I might lay down my miſerable life: in fact, a ſecond battle enſued that ſame year, in the neighbourhood of Guaſtalla, but I had no other ſhare in it than to obſerve it at a diſtance, being poſted with my batallion out of the reach of the enemy's fire. The victory declared for us, though with conſiderable loſs on our ſide, and I went that ſame evening to congratulate the Marſhall on his ſucceſs; he, at firſt ſight of me, ſaid, You have acted right, I was juſt enquiring after you; you are not wounded this battle, therefore get ready to depart for Paris within theſe two hours, for as ſoon as the diſpatch is ready you muſt ſet out for that court. The ſhot that I received at the battle of Parma,

made

made leſs impreſſion upon me than this command of the Marſhall, nor was there any method to diſpenſe with it, that being an honour coveted by every one in ſuch caſes, becauſe it is the means of their advancement; nor is it conferred upon any but thoſe who are eſteemed at court: in regard to me, it was the ſame as if I was going to be executed; the Duke, Ducheſs, the Prince, and Count Termes, were all objects for me of confuſion and horror; I was ſure of being diſcovered, I feared being puniſhed; the leaſt that could befall me, was to be ſcandaliſed; I lamented my cruel fate, and implored the protection of heaven in favour of an innocent; I called for death to finiſh my miſery, but vain were the lamentations of my poor diſtracted heart! At eleven at night I was obliged to mount in a poſt-chaiſe, and depart for Verſailles.

Imagine the thoughts which paſſed in my mind during this journey; I could not now evade the execution of my orders by flight, as I had done at other times; my buſineſs was an affair of ſtate, and if I tranſgreſſed in it, I ſhould not think myſelf ſecure in the fartheſt confines of the world; and I muſt haſten

haſten night and day to proceed to Paris, when at the ſame time I was deſirous of being as far as I poſſibly could from it; and when I reflected in what manner I ſhould be able, when I arrived there, to eſcape the dangers which threatened me, I knew not on what to reſolve. With theſe troubles in my mind I arrived at Lyons, and waited upon Mr. D'Arcore while my dinner was getting ready, but, luckily for me, he was not at home; I then returned to the Poſt-office, where I found a courier from Verſailles who was going to Italy; I know not how it happened, but I accidentally aſked him if he had any letter for me? telling him at the ſame time my name; I have, Sir, replied he, and immediately delivered one into my hand. I ſaw by the direction that it came from Madam Cafardo, and haſtened to my room, impatient to read it, and, on opening it, found the contents to this effect:

" Dear Sir,

I give you great news in a few lines, becauſe the courier is juſt going out: the Duke is dead, after a ſhort but violent fever, and the Ducheſs will be eſpouſed to the Prince in a few days; I

now

now hope for the pleaſure of ſeeing you at the end of the campaign. Adieu.

CAFARDO."

This intelligence called me from death to life; the Duke being gone, my circumſtances wore a different aſpect; I was now more anxious to get to Paris, than, before receiving this letter, I was to be at a diſtance from it; nor ſhould I have had patience to ſtay for dinner, had not Mr. D'Arcore come in, who detained me a few moments; after which I proceeded on my journey, much more contented than when I firſt ſet out.

CHAP. III.

Honours conferred on me at Verſailles; and news received of Count Termes being in the Baſtile.

MY chief ſtudy, during my journey to Verſailles, was, how to regulate myſelf in my preſent circumſtances: the affair was delicate to the laſt point; I advanced towards my parents, but knew not how they might look upon ſuch a child; they may indeed very readily know me to be their child,

child, but who knows if they will be willing to expoſe to the public the weakneſs of their youth, and would much rather confine me in a cloyſter, or at leaſt in ſome province diſtant from the court: the beſt ſtep therefore for me to take, was, not to make myſelf known to my parents, unleſs I ſhould ſee that I could do it with ſecurity; but how could I keep myſelf ſecret at Verſailles, when the preſence of Count Termes was ſufficient to diſcover me? having acted with juſt reaſons in reproaching his infidelity, it would be beneath my character to entreat his ſecrecy; and at the ſame he, being unfaithful, might willingly betray me through motives of prejudice or intereſt. Involved in theſe thoughts, I unexpectedly arrived within half a mile of Verſailles before I had the leaſt ſuſpicion of being near it, and was rouſed from my lethargy by the noiſe of coaches, and the great concourſe of people upon the road: I was dreſſed in my regimental uniform, and an alarm being ſpread that I brought an expreſs from Italy, I was no ſooner got into Verſailles, than I was ſurrounded by a multitude of people, every one curious to know the purport of my diſpatches. Being un-

accuſtomed to expeditions of this ſort, I knew not where to diſmount; nor to whom I ſhould give the Marſhall's advices: I reſolved however to drive to the palace of the Prince of ****, my father. As good luck would have it the Prince was at home, and, as ſoon as he ſaw me, he ran to meet me, ſaying, that he expected me every moment: this to me ſeemed ſtrange; but it was natural to think, that, after the death of the Duke, he had wrote to the Marſhall to ſend me to Verſailles on the firſt occaſion; but the only thought I had then, was to execute my commiſſion; therefore, before any thing elſe, I told him my buſineſs, and asked his advice which way to proceed. I will tell you, ſays the Prince, with more joy than at firſt, and ordering his coach to be got ready, bade me follow him, for he would preſent me to the King himſelf. The Prince immediately conducted me to the King, who received me with great affability, and, after he had read the Marſhall's letters, asked me the particulars of the battle of Guaſtalla and Parma, of which I fully informed him; he ſeemed much pleaſed with my anſwers, and ſaid, that I had ſpirit ſuperior to my age, and that he would

would not forget to reward me for my great expedition; he likewiſe ordered me not to return to Italy, unleſs it was by his command. When I came back into the anti-chamber, I found the news of the victory was known to every one, and all preſent were ſollicitous, as is common on ſuch occaſions, to enquire after the welfare of their friends and relations, whilſt I, in the mean time, was trembling leſt Count Termes ſhould be there and unluckily take notice of me: not finding him in that multitude I thought myſelf very fortunate, and haſtened from that place leſt he ſhould drop in at laſt. I went directly to the Ducheſs, who already knew of my arrival, and was waiting with impatience to ſee me: I do not know, Madam, ſaid I, kiſſing her hand, whether I ſhould excuſe myſelf for my ſudden departure, or expreſs my joy in ſeeing you, on my return, in ſo happy a ſituation. We will not talk, ſaid ſhe, of things that are paſt; my troubles being finiſhed by the death of the Duke, yours, on that account, ought likewiſe to be ended: I have the greateſt of pleaſure in ſeeing you, and have a hundred things to tell you; but you have now occaſion for reſt, there-

fore go to your former apartment, refreſh yourſelf, and to-morrow I will ſee you again. From the Ducheſs I went to Madam Cafardo, who threw her arms about my neck, and almoſt ſmothered me with kiſſes; I had no reaſon to object to this familiarity, but I thought, had ſhe known all ſhe would not have taken ſo much pleaſure in it: I told her, in a few words, all that had happened to me in Italy; but I alſo wanted to obtain from her ſome news of Count Termes, therefore it was proper to talk of every thing, to draw her inſenſibly to diſcourſe on that ſubject: in ſpeaking of the Duke, I asked her, how the Ducheſs accompliſhed her deſign concerning the girl that flew from Avignon? I will tell you, replied ſhe, for ſince the Duke is dead we may ſpeak more at large: that girl, called Miſs D'Arville, was not daughter to the Duke, but to the Prince of **** and the Ducheſs, who was with child by the Prince who expected her in marriage, when ſhe was obliged, by the policy of her parents, to marry the Duke; and the pretended journey to Spain was only a ſcheme that ſhe might be brought to-bed in ſome private place, for the ſake of her reputation and life: this

ſcheme

ſcheme turned out wonderfully well, and at Rome ſhe was delivered of a daughter; but this affair being known by more than one, for our better ſecurity, we thought of a contrivance to prevent the Duke's miſtruſt; Madam Fralle, waiting-maid to the Ducheſs, my miſtreſs, had a private correſpondence with the Duke before he married the Ducheſs, ſo we reſolved that Madam Fralle ſhould ſay ſhe was with child by the Duke, and that her ſituation was the occaſion of our deferring the journey to Spain; and that in a ſhort time after the child was born, it was ſent to the retirement at Avignon, from whence it at laſt ran away: the Duke believed all this hiſtory for real truth, nor did he ever ſo much as ſuſpect the Ducheſs to be the mother of it: I continued to enquire after it from time to time, of the governeſs of Avignon, and ſent the neceſſary ſupplies for her maintainance: the beſt expedient, for the ſecurity of the Ducheſs, and not to let the poor child be ruined, was, to tempt her with good words, and ſhut her up in the cloyſter; accordingly I wrote with my own hand to the governeſs, and to herſelf, as if I had been her mother; but the thing did not

turn out as we expected, for Miſs D'Arville, in company with her maid, ran away from the convent, nor have we had any account of them ſince they left that place: you know that the Ducheſs would have perſuaded you to go in ſearch of her, under pretence that ſhe wanted to divorce herſelf from the Duke, and you delivered yourſelf from that troubleſome taſk by your flight, in which you acted like a man of ſenſe, and a good ſervant to your miſtreſs; but when you departed from France, ſhe did not give over the thoughts of ſearching for her daughter, for nature ſpoke too highly in her favour; ſhe ſuſpected that Miſs D'Arville held a ſecret correſpondence with Count Termes, and, to prevent this, ſhe contrived to ſend him to the army in Italy; and after you went away, ſhe ſuppoſing that he muſt know ſomething of her, had him recalled back to Verſailles; this alſo was in vain, he ſwore and proteſted he had no news of her ſince her departure from Avignon; at that time they pretended to believe him, but, after the death of the Duke, he was found to be falſe in his proteſtations and oaths.

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The Prince and the Ducheſs, who were urgent to find their child, (for the Duke being dead they were under no apprehenſions) would not give credit to the Count's relation, but contrived to have his papers ſearched; the viſit was made under other pretences; ſix days ago, by order from the court, all the papers that were taken from him were put into my hands; I having a letter of Miſs D'Arville, could compare the characters together, and, in fact, amongſt his writings I found three letters that are undoubtedly hers, but without name or date, ſo we cannot diſcover where ſhe is, but only find by her letters that ſhe loves him: the inſincerity of Count Termes has irritated the Prince, and more ſo the Ducheſs, who pretends that he muſt yet know more, but will not ſpeak; in conſequence of which they cauſed him to be ſhut up in the Baſtile, from whence he will not get his liberty till he gives further information of Miſs D'Arville.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Means contrived by me to get to the Speech of Count Termes.

WHO can conceive, unleſs they had been preſent to read my heart in my eyes, the internal movement of my ſoul, during this account of Madam Cafardo? As much as I was upon my guard, I believe I changed colour at leaſt ten times; nor do I know how it happened that Madam Cafardo did not take notice of it; the particulars I heard from her combined exactly with thoſe I had heard from Duli's wife. Happy was it for me, that to Madam Cafardo, and to every one elſe, I always wrote by another hand, or elſe in the method ſhewed me by Mr. Befone, which altered my characters, and rendered them quite different. With my own, I wrote to no one but Count Termes himſelf, and I now repented even of that. It is indeed true, that the ſtrict ſearch made after me by my parents, gave me reaſon to hope for a benignant reception, but the rigorous methods uſed with Count Termes, gave me little room to hope for my love, and

and this uncertainty made me abſolutely reſolve not to diſcover myſelf. It has already appeared that I had juſt reaſon to be diſguſted with Count Termes, and I can really ſay, that I came to Paris, more with a diſpoſition to forget him than to love him; but when are we ſettled in our paſſions? the honour of Connt Termes in keeping ſecret what little he knew of me, by hiding my letters, was a crime to my parents, but in my eyes it was the act of a hero; to be impriſoned for my cauſe in the Baſtile, he merited my heart and pardon for the offence of his ſuppoſed infidelity. Thus am I again in love with him; in confuſion and admiration for his impriſonment, and burning with deſire at leaſt to ſpeak to him, to thank him for his ſincerity, to enjoin him ſilence, and aſſure him of my gratitude. This thought troubled me above all others, for ſo long as the Count concealed me, I thought I could not be diſcovered by any one elſe. Little did I ſuſpect that I had the enemy in the ſame houſe with me, and that with all my paſt precautions it was not in my power to be ſecure; the truth of this time will evince, and ſufficient-

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ly prove how little human prudence avails ſometimes to avoid certain ſudden combinations of facts.

Having left the apartment of Madam Cafardo, after this general diſcourſe, I went to my own apartment, where I found Mr. Befone, who waited to receive me there; we paſſed great part of the night in talking of the affairs of Italy; I told him of my meeting with Miſs Gianetton at Turin and Milan, and of what had happened to me by Tartar, in Italy; and he told me the reaſons for which that villain had loſt the Duke's protection, and was obliged to fly from France, which, as they were things of the moſt ſcandalous nature, and can afford the reader neither pleaſure or profit, I ſhall omit to mention them here; it is true indeed, that books, like a looking-glaſs, repreſent to us both good and evil; good that we may imitate it, and evil that we may learn to abhor it; but it is doing ſuch villains too much honour to mention even their names, as I I have got ſo much of my own to write that I cannot loſe time to write for others. When I was by myſelf, I began to reflect by what means I could get to ſpeak with Count Termes; I knew,

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by my own experience, how closely the prisoners in the Bastile were confined, and that to get permission to speak to any of them, I must have an order from the King himself: by means of the Prince I thought I could get such permission, but the very proposal of my speaking with Count Termes, would awaken his suspicion, and hazard my own safety: Janeson, who was my companion in the Bastile, providentially came into my mind, of whom, since I left that place, I never before once thought; to this unhappy man the Prince owed some sort of an obligation, and I was much obligated to him, for he was a very great comfort to me, nor ought I so long to have forgotten him; if I can but contrive to speak to him, said I, within myself, who knows but that by his means I can also speak to Count Termes, or at least give him a letter. Flattered with these hopes I resolved to venture that step, and give the Prince my reasons to make Janeson a visit; the doubt that yet remained to be decided, was, to know if Janeson was still in the Bastile, or if he had recovered, as he expected in a short time, his liberty; to inform myself of this was not difficult, the first time I saw the

Prince

Prince I dexterouſly entered into diſcourſe about the Duke, and of the trick he ſerved us, when we were arreſted in the Baſtile; I then, as if it had juſt come into my mind, asked him if poor Janeſon was yet in priſon? That is right, replied the Prince, I muſt get him a pardon; I thought of it ſome time ago, but it went out of my mind again. How willingly, ſaid I, would I ſee him to put him in good heart, by giving him a few bottles of Burgundy. If you deſire it, replied the Prinee, I can get you that permiſſion the firſt time you go to Paris. I ſhall take it as a particular favour, anſwered I, as I have got ſome buſineſs of my own to tranſact at Paris the latter end of next week. Well, ſaid he, remember me in time, I may perhaps have ſome good news to ſend him.

We ſaid no more upon that head; my heart was over-joyed to have obtained my wiſh, and in a few days after I remembered the Prince of his promiſe, telling him, that I muſt go to Paris the next day; he gave me a billet which was ſufficient for my purpoſe, and charged me to aſſure Janeſon, from him, that in two weeks at moſt he ſhould have

have his liberty. When I arrived at Paris I put up at an inn, nor did I think of doing any thing that day, for it was too late. They asked me if I ſhould object to eating my ſupper with two Italians, who deſired company; after the knowledge of my birth, I conſidered myſelf to be an Italian likewiſe, and had that partiality for my own country which is natural in us all; I rejoiced on this occaſion to bear them company, and anſwered, that I ſhould eſteem it a favour. They were man and wife, as they told me, and at the firſt words they ſpoke to me, I knew, by their accent, that the woman was a Venetian and the man a Neapolitan. We ſupped merrily, and diſcourſed about Venice, which I praiſed as it merited, but was greatly ſurpriſed when Madam very imprudently asked me, if I knew in Venice that Frenchman who was arreſted one night in miſtake for the waiting-maid of ſuch a perſon? naming the gentleman who was ſo courteous to me. Too much ſincerity with thoſe of whom we have but little knowledge, is dangerous; I told her, coolly, that I even did not hear him ſpoke of. She then began to tell me the ſtory, in ſuch a manner, that I was certain ſhe

was the very perſon who ran away from ſuch a worthy maſter; and, in truth, though at firſt I liked her company, it now began to be a horror to me; and when I ſaw in her a young girl flown from the worthieſt of men, I judged that ſhe merited the hatred of all men, and the particular vengeance of heaven. I had taken the reſolution to acquaint her maſter, and would have performed it, and have procured her, with her unlawful huſband, to be arreſted immediately, if I had not believed, that, by ſending her to Venice, it would be making him a preſent not worthy of acceptance; the ſtory of their amorous adventures is too immodeſt to have a place in theſe my memorials, which, if not a profit to others, ſhall not be to their detriment.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

An Accident happens which affords me an Opportunity to be grateful to my Friend at Venice, by finding out his Waiting-maid.

SUPPER was ſcarcely over when other people arrived, who joined in company with Madam Roſaura and Signior d'Albevit, for ſo were theſe two Italians called; two of the people who came in were of their party, but the others ſeemed to be ſtrangers introduced, as I ſoon perceived, to be trapann'd; Madam propoſed a party at cards, and Signior d'Albevit excuſed himſelf from making one at it, under pretence of writing ſome letters which were to be diſpatched that night: I kept at ſome diſtance to obſerve the event, and found that while Madam amuſed the gallant, one of her accomplices managed the cards juſt as he thought proper, while the other acted his part by ſlight of hand, and they performed their parts with ſo much dexterity, that the ſtrangers loſt upwards of three hundred Louiſd'ores. Incenſed with theſe vile proceedings, I withdrew from the aſſembly, but gratitude towards my friend at Venice deprived me of reſt,

I ſtudied all that night which way I ſhould proceed; ſhould I apply to a Juſtice without a proper commiſſion, it would be to no purpoſe; I therefore reſolved to try by fair means to reduce her to her duty, and make her ſenſible of reaſon: ſuch an attempt could not hurt me, and might turn out beneficial both for her huſband and herſelf; to get a private conference with her was no difficult matter, for during ſupper-time ſhe was continually gazing at me, and playing with her eyes all the vices of the ſex to ſeduce me. My knowledge of the world made me ſoon underſtand her language, and ſuggeſted to me a way to bring about my deſign, though by undertaking a part which I never acted before. I went the next morning to pay her a viſit in her own room, but finding there her ſuppoſed huſband, we talked about various affairs, and taking out my ſnuff-box, which was gold of beautiful workmanſhip, took a pinch of ſnuff, and offered it her likewiſe; ſhe admired the box, and when ſhe returned it to me, I whiſpered her in the ear, The ſnuff-box is yours, Madam, if you will only do me the honour to ſpeak a few words with you in private. We will think of it,

ſaid

ſaid ſhe, ſoftly. I deferred my viſit to the Baſtile till next day, and, in the mean time, went to paſs half an hour in a coffee-houſe near my own lodging; I had been there ſcarcely half an hour before Mr. d'Albevit came in, and behaved as familiar with me as if he had been my brother; his preſence and behaviour troubled me much, and I got up to go away; he then ſaid, (as if he was ignorant of what had paſſed between his wife and me) If you are going, Sir, to your lodging, I ſhall take it as a favour, it you will tell my wife that I ſhall not dine at home. I found by this, that the plot was contrived to leave Madam alone all that day, and, by that artifice, to hinder me from having any ſuſpicion. I anſwered him, that he ſhould be ſerved; and went directly to my lodging. Madam Roſaura no ſooner heard me in my chamber, but ſhe came and led me by the hand into her own, and, bolting the door within-ſide, Come, ſaid ſhe, if a few words are not ſufficient, you may now ſpeak an hundred, ſince my huſband dines abroad, nor will he come home till night. She was covered only with a thin bed-gown of ſky-colour ſarcenet, which ſhe had put on at riſing out

of bed; taking me by the hand, ſhe careleſsly flung herſelf on a chair, as if weakened by the heat of the ſeaſon: Sit you down alſo, ſaid ſhe, and you will be at more eaſe. Though her immodeſty put me to the bluſh, her abandoned courſe of life excited my compaſſion: Madam, ſaid I love you — And I alſo, ſaid ſhe, (interrupting me) and I alſo am dying for you. But how? proceeded I, ſince it was only laſt night that you firſt began to know me. Why, replied ſhe, laughing, laſt night was alſo the firſt time you had any knowledge of me. No, Madam, ſaid I, ſeriouſly laſt night was not the firſt time I had knowledge of you; I know who you are, and who was your maſter; I know that from him you have ſcandalouſly ran away, nor can you deny it, becauſe I have convincing proof in my hands, to make you aſhamed and repent of your bad conduct: on me it depends, Madam, that before night you go to the houſe of correction, and your unworthy companion to a priſon; I reſpect, in you, a friend whoſe houſe you have diſhonoured by your flight; bluſh, Madam, at your actions, and be aſſured, that the advantages of your education will be a ſevere torment to you, when

when you reaſonably reflect, that you have diſhonoured yourſelf to the higheſt degree, by aſſociating with a villain, a cheat, and moſt profligate wretch, who is at this time bringing down upon your head the ſevereſt curſes of heaven: I ſhall not take upon me to lay before you the refined principles of a virtuous life, but ſhall leave that to perſons of better capacity than myſelf; to convince a reaſonable perſon, the dictates of philoſophy and reaſon will be ſufficient: what a figure will you make in the world, when it ſhall be clear to all Paris what you really are? will it not be ſeen that you are a debauched and an unworthy wretch? our greateſt treaſure, Madam, is honour; and though by your artifices you may acquire a ſubſiſtence, you have ſold your honour at a moſt deſpicable price: in ſtooping much beneath yourſelf, you have done wrong to your reaſon, and have defiled thoſe amiable abilities, by ſacrificing them to a wretch who aims only to advance his own fortune at the coſt of your ruin: ſhake yourſelf, dear Madam, from this lethargy, ſo fatal to your virtue; and if your paſt infamy does not terrify you, tremble with the horror of future conſequences;

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for after he has ſtript many others by your means, you may readily ſuppoſe that he at laſt will ſtrip you alſo, and leave you abandoned to the open world: return, Madam, to the houſe of your good maſter, and I will aſſure you of his indulgent pardon and kind reception, as his own child; and if you have the courage to break the cords that tie you to ſuch an infamous wretch, I will immediately procure a place for you, where he ſhall not find you; and after finding out proper means to retrieve your character, will ſend you back to Italy with credit. I talked a conſiderable time upon this head, becauſe I obſerved that it had its proper effect upon Roſaura, and therefore thought I ſhould not do right to neglect ſo favourable an opportunity of perſuading her to what was reaſonable. I ſhould have proceeded further, had ſhe not ſuddenly thrown herſelf at my knees, and, bitterly crying, begged me to have compaſſion on her, and not deny her my aſſiſtance in ſuch delicate circumſtances. She firmly believed that I had orders from her maſter to arreſt her, becauſe ſhe found me ſo well informed of her flight; and having ſhewed her the billet from the Prince, directed

rected to the governour of the Bastile, she was immediately persuaded that it related to herself. To disengage her from her infamous connections, there was no time to be lost; I immediately hired a coach, and making her step into it, with a little bundle of her most valuable effects, I conducted her to the house in which I lodged before I went to the army, charging the landlady to keep her there as privately as possible. It is needless to mention here the rage of Mr. d'Albevit, when he found that she had made off, nor could get the least news of her; of him I shall speak in another place; Madam in three days retir'd to a monastery, to wait for an answer from Venice, to the letter which I had wrote to Mr. N. N. to inform him of what happened, and to know his orders: this accident detained me three days from visiting Count Termes; but I was no ways sorry for it, having preserved a woman well educated, from the brink of her destruction, and pleased a friend who had shewed me so much kindness; in fact they were both obliged to me during their lives, and I had afterwares occasion to rejoice that I had acted in that manner.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

My Meeting with Count Termes in the Baſtile.

I Preſented myſelf to the governor of the Baſtile, and delivered to him the billet which I had received from the Prince, to get permiſſion to ſpeak with Janeſon, whom I found in another room more commodious than the former, where he was writing as uſual, contented with his deſtiny like a modern Diogenes in his butt. I thought at the ſight of me he would have ran mad with joy; *Quonam meo fato fieri dicam*, ſaid he, in Latin, as if he had been talking to one of the doctors of the Sorbonne, then mixed it with ſome French, wondering, after ſo long an abſence, I ſhould think of him. After mutual expreſſions of friendſhip, I aſked him what he was writing? he anſwered, that it was a Comedy, called, The Philoſopher Married; to perſuade, by his example, all other lettered men not to marry. I read one ſcene of it, which was written with real ſpirit; but my mind was intent upon objects of greater conſequence to me: I aſked him, if he was always alone? or whether they ſtill permitted

mitted him to keep company with other prisoners in the Bastile? he replied, that he was generally alone; that he had liberty indeed to keep company with Count Termes, who had been committed to that place twenty days ago, but that the Count never would speak, and was always melancholy, so that he could reap no satisfaction by sitting with him. I know this officer, said I, and wonder for what he came here; but I would willingly see him, if possible. Leave that to me, said Janeson; but I must first shut the eyes of my keepers. Any thing that you want, answered I, is at your service; and I will stay and dine with you, provided you promise to let me have a good dinner. You need not doubt me, replied Janeson; wait a little, and I will be back presently. So saying, he went out to speak with the keeper, nor did he return for a considerable time. I was determined to dine there, that I might catch an opportunity to speak with Count Termes by himself, while Janeson was employed in preparing the dinner. After passing half an hour in expectation of Janeson's return, the door opened on a sudden, and instead of Janeson, who should I see before me but Count

Count Termes, who no ſooner caſt his eyes upon me, than he ſtarted back with ſurprize. According to my circumſtances at that time, this was the rougheſt trial I ever was put to in my life; my ſoul was at that inſtant overwhelmed with anger, jealouſy, eſteem, love, and gratitude; I had a great deal to ſay, but could not expreſs it all in one breath; and if Janeſon ſhould happen to ſurpriſe me, I was in danger. To begin with what was moſt important, I put my finger to my mouth and went toward him, ſaying, Prudence, Sir, you only know me, and in you I truſt. Truſt in me, replied he; truſt in me, Miſs, for I will conceal it at the coſt of my life: to convince you that I am neither unfaithful nor ingrateful — Here Janeſon entered, and obliged us to change our diſcourſe; in his preſence we behaved like two friends that had known each other in the army; but he ſoon gave us liberty to talk in a different ſtile. Friend, ſaid he to me, to dine there are wanting the pence. Here, replied I, (putting in his hand ſix piſtoles) but take care that they be well laid out; do'nt fail to procure ſome good Burgundy. You are in good hands, replied he; ſharpen your appetites,

appetites, while I go into the kitchen to see that you are served with the best. So saying he went away, and I reassumed my discourse with the Count: I informed him, in a few words, of what most material had happened to me, since his departure from Avignon to that day: I revealed to him the secret of my birth; the circumstances I was in, and the reason for not discovering myself to my parents, till I first was secure of their affection, and had their favourable opinion of our loves. He informed me also of his adventures, and that he had received three of my letters, which were taken with the rest of his papers; nor would he, at the cost of finishing his life in the Bastile, tell even what he knew of me. Consider, Sir, said I, who you are, and who I am; what I have done for you, what you have promised me, and what might also happen to us both in these difficult circumstances; and reflect, at the same time, how you deserve to be treated; your amours with the Countess of * * * *, in Pavia, has tormented me enough, without contriving, by your imprudence, to torment me more: I will suppose that you courted her for pastime; but to a heart sincere and

faithful like mine, even jokes, in such matters, is counted an offence; I will forget what is past, because a prudent woman in my case ought not to neglect the thoughts of her honour, her liberty, and her life; degrading herself without effect, by the weakness of a passion, which though it ought to be reasonable ought not to be blind: if there is any thing undeserving of pardon, it is that of not burning my letters after you had read them, to imitate my precautions, and not expose yourself to the danger which has befallen you through your imprudence: with one that judges rightly, a fault of this sort is less pardonable than the inconstancy of love; the anger of a jealous lover is softened by repentance, but an imprudent conduct endangers a persons honour, and is his own fault, and not that of another; I know well to whom your present situation gives the greatest torment; I am not the cause that you have lost your liberty, but if there was occasion I would restore it to you at the expence of my life, and can yet do it by discovering myself to be what I am; but, alas! I am under a necessity not to do it, and must sacrifice my beloved to preserve

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my own honour: heaven is witneſs, and my heart alſo, that this ſacrifice is to me an inexpreſſible grief; and if you are doomed to a barbarous ſlavery, I am bound to ſuffer the moſt excruciating pangs, during the whole remainder of my miſerable life. Oh God! in my cruel circumſtances, what muſt I do, not to be ungrateful to my love, nor cruel to myſelf? if you will, dear Count, that I ſhould diſcover myſelf— No, anſwered he, interrupting me, and mixing his tears with mine, no, Miſs, if I had been willing to diſcover you to your parents, I ſhould not have been in this place; and to comply with your wiſh in concealing your ſecret, renders my priſon a palace to me: I confeſs that in not burning your letters after reading, I was imprudent; but what man is prudent when love overrules his reaſon? it is a ſatisfaction to me that I denied my correſpondence with you; becauſe, being convicted of a falſity by the diſcovery of your letters, I am thereby able to convince you of my love, by perſiſting in my denial at the expence of my liberty: will not this attone for my fault committed by me in my amours with the Counteſs

of * * * * at Pavia? and happy me, to conceal the ſecret of your ſex, and of our love. I will not ſpeak, Miſs, be aſſured, of my fidelity; but what will be the conſequence of this our unhappy love, and of my loſt liberty? What will be the fruit of your trouble, if we do not contrive by ſome means to render ourſelves content? He ſtrove to proceed, but his tears prevented him, and amorouſly ſqueezing my hands, and kiſſing them, he ſtood motionleſs, without uttering one word. We conſumed ſome time in theſe diſcourſes; it was proper however, that we ſhould reſolve on ſomething before Janeſon returned. The Count, by the management of the Duke of * * *, his protector, expected in a ſhort time to be reſtored to his liberty.

In treating with a lover ſo tender, honoured, virtuous, and faithful, for whom I had already ſuffered ſo much, I was unwilling to riſk the uncertainty of my parents giving their conſent to our nuptials, and found the beſt method would be not to diſcover myſelf to them till we were actually wedded. I was not obliged to know that the Prince of * * * * was my father, and the Ducheſs my mother, to prevent my marry-

marrying without their consent; and if they wanted me to marry one, who, in their opinion, might be a more proper husband for me, they ought in time to have let me know whose child I was. Thus forming my conduct by the light of reason, I resolved that the first point in my nuptials should be my inclination, and who can blame me for this resolution, when my first choice was honour, merit and virtue?

In consequence of these sound reflections, it was agreed between us, that when the Count obtained his liberty, he should immediately leave Paris, and proceed to Milan, where he should wait for me, and from thence we should pass to Venice to celebrate our nuptials. With this resolution we were entirely satisfied, nor were there ever two lovers, who, like us, for the space of five years, had less correspondence by words or letters, and at the end of that time were more in love with each other than at first, as was the case between the Count and me.

Dinner being ready, we ate very hearty, but Janeson, as usual, drank more than he ate: the heat of the summer, united with that of the kitchen, in which he would stay to see the

dinner prepared, made him drink to that exceſs, that I thought he never would have been ſatisfied. Towards night I parted from both, but had not the pleaſure to ſpeak one word in ſecret with the Count, becauſe Janeſon proteſted that he would ſpeak that afternoon enough to laſt him a whole week. Returning to my lodging, I found that Mr. d' Albevit had ſuddenly made off; the miſſing of his ſuppoſed wife, together with my going to the Baſtile, were myſteries he could not comprehend; this added to ſome public complaints of people who had loſt money in gaming with him, terrified him ſo much, that he thought himſelf no longer ſecure in that place. The day following I went to viſit Roſaura with this news, which gave her great pleaſure; I then ſet out again on my journey to Verſailles.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Child of Madam Cafardo preſented to me by a Nurſe.

AFter ſettling matters ſo ſucceſsfully with the Count at Paris, I was very well ſatisfied that I could not be diſcovered at Verſailles, provided I kept my own ſecret. It now remained for me to wait as contentedly as I could, till Count Termes was releas'd from his confinement, and without my giving the leaſt ſuſpicion by enquiring after him, I could get news enough from Madam Cafardo, who had in her hands my letters, which were the proofs againſt him. She alſo had told me, that as ſoon as ſhe had done examining the Count's papers, if ſhe found nothing more relating to Miſs D'Arville, ſhe would ſpeak to the Prince in the Count's favour. By this I knew that my letters were yet in Madam Cafardo's hands, and that paſſing from her to the Prince, nothing worſe could happen. An accident one day happened, which diverted me highly. I was reading in my own room, when, without permiſſion, a woman came in, leading in her hand

hand a child that was between four and five years old. I asked her with surprize her business with me; but how great was my astonishment when she told me, that she had brought the child to kiss his father's hand. I set it upon my knee, nor could I help laughing to think that I had represented in that court, for above four years, a husband and a father. I knew that seven months after our pretended nuptials, she was delivered of a child; but as I knew that myself had no share therein, I never enquired whether it was dead or alive. This was the child of Madam Cafardo, and the person who conducted it to me was the nurse, who supposing me to be husband to Madam Cafardo, took me also for the father of the child, and thought it would give me a pleasure to see it, flattering herself with the hopes of getting a present from me. This thing diverted me inwardly, but prudence required that in this scene I should still maintain the character I appeared in, and accept the title of Papa. I at last got rid of them, by giving the nurse a present, and telling her I took very kindly her care of my son. Madam Cafardo disapproved of this proceeding of the nurse, because

cauſe ſhe knew it was only reminding me of her ſhame. Her view was to be really my wife, which ſhe already deſerved for her generoſity and love towards me. It was not in my power to accompliſh her deſires; therefore I thought that in her eyes I muſt look ungrateful: With how many artifices ſhe explained to me her deſire of being my real wife. According as ſhe advanced in her tenderneſs for me, the more my inquietude increaſed, and I was ſo perplexed about it, that I could not ſleep unleſs I firſt locked the door of my chamber, through fear that ſhe, being overpowered with her conjugal love, might come in and ſurprize me in bed, which would terrify me more than the battle of Parma. To get quit of this uneaſineſs, I reſolved to depart for Italy; but then I could not do it without an expreſs order from his Majeſty; and again, I muſt wait to ſee what would be the deſtiny of Count Termes, not to render uſeleſs the meaſures taken between us. In the while, the nuptials of the Prince with the Dutcheſs were celebrated privately, without any other appearance than that of living both in one palace. The Duke of * * * embraced this opportunity

tunity to implore of them the discharge of Count Termes, assuring them, on his word, that Count Termes knew no more of the fugitive of Avignon, than what they already had heard; and that if he should happen to know any more of her, they might depend on his acquainting them with it: in short, the Count was released after being imprisoned there for a month. This news I had first from Madam Cafardo, and afterwards by a billet from himself, conveyed secretly to me at Versailles, in which he told me, that he would depart for Milan at my first notice.

I did not know how long I might be obliged to defer my return to Italy, nor my heart would not suffer the Count to depart before me, for fear that little distance between Milan and Pavia might render him again unfaithful; I answered him, that I would try with the utmost diligency to get orders for Italy, and advised him to wait a few days, till I had something more positive to tell him: my prudence suggested this, but my destiny led me to the difficult step, and rewarded me in a manner entirely unforeseen. I visited often the King's anti-chamber, to remind him of my person, and to get dispatched to Italy;

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in fact, but a few days passed before the Secretary of State put into my hands a commission, appointing me to be a Lieutenant-Colonel in my own regiment, together with a purse, containing an hundred pistoles, to bear my expences back to the army. How great was my joy on this occasion! never before did I receive with so much pleasure, the congratulations of my friends on my good fortune; they supposed my joy to proceed from the great favour conferred on me by the court; but I, in my heart, was glad to be far from it, and never return to it again.

Madam Cafardo was the only person that disturbed my joy with her tears; the example of her mistress made her desire also to be married. Is it possible, said she, that after four years and more, you have not yet obliterated the memory of my crime! and you are now going to depart from a woman who always loved you and loves you still: who knows but my cruel destiny may deprive me of ever seeing you more? why do you not at least leave me with the security in my soul, that, either returning or dying, you are really mine, that I might justly lament your death,

death, or ſigh for your return! Her grief was reaſonable; her pretenſions were juſtified by her favours, and if I had been in a ſtate to take a wife, gratitude would have ſpoke in her behalf; but as the caſe ſtood, I was obliged to conceal my reaſon by trifling excuſes, and, contrary to my inclination, confeſs myſelf ungrateful.

After this I thought of giving the Count notice to depart for Italy, where I reſolved to be as ſoon as himſelf: it was an eaſy matter to write him a couple of lines, but to whom could I give them to deliver them ſafely into his hands? the perſon that brought me his billet and took my anſwer, behaved with fidelity; but where to find him I could not tell, and to another I could not truſt: for if my correſpondence only ſhould be known by the Ducheſs or the Prince, my hopes would be utterly blaſted.

I was walking in the gallery of the palace, revolving on which way I ſhould accompliſh my deſign, when Madam Cafardo paſſed by with ſome papers in her hand, and a ſervant followed her with a little bag of other papers under his arm, going towards the Prince's apart-

apartment: I aſked her, where ſhe was going? ſhe replied, that ſhe was going to deliver to the Prince the papers of Count Termes, amongſt which ſhe had found nothing more, relative to the fugitive of Avignon, than the three letters that were in her hands; ſhe likewiſe ſaid, that the Count had ſent a perſon for them, and that the Prince intended to return them; but that ſhe would adviſe the Prince to keep the three letters of Miſs D'Arville, in caſe any thing might happen hereafter. This intelligence pleaſed me, thinking, that if I could hide amongſt the Count's papers a billet of mine, that he would receive it without danger; I flattered myſelf that I had found the beſt method poſſible, and not to let ſlip ſo promiſing an opportunity, I immediately retired to my room to write it.

CHAP. VIII.

An unexpected Accident happens, by which the Prince discovers me to be his Daughter.

NO sooner had I sat down to write to the Count, but a page from the Prince came to me, saying, that the Prince desired to speak with me: at this message my blood ran chill in every vein, as if I had been informed of some sudden accident; I had no motive to fear any thing, but I, knowing myself to be unfortunate, tore what I had wrote into a hundred pieces, because I would not venture to keep it about me, nor trust it under a lock, frightened by the experience of what had happened to the Count; so torn, I tossed it into the open street, and then went to the Prince, whom I found walking about in his cabinet which joined to the door of the Duchess's apartment; the curtain of her door was down, nor did I hear any one in her room; I asked him, what were his commands? As you are ready, said he, to depart for Italy, I have got a commission for you to execute, which is of the utmost importance. This beginning revived my spirits,

ſpirits, but little did I ſuſpect how it was to finiſh. The affair which we are going to treat of, ſaid he, muſt be managed with a niceneſs ſuperior to your age and experience; I know that you have abilities and ſpirit, but, to prevent any miſcarriage in this deſign, I will give you in writing the manner in which you muſt regulate your conduct; the inſtructions will be ſhort; I will dictate, and you may ſit down there and write.

It will be needleſs for me to tell how I was ſtruck with horror at ſuch a command; becauſe, let any one put themſelves in my circumſtances, they will ſoon gueſs at the ſource of my fears, and have motives to tremble for my ſake: I knew that the Prince had three letters of mine which were wrote to the Count, and paſſed a little before under his eyes, and as much as I could alter my writing, I knew how eaſy it would be to ſee the reſemblance, if he ſhould confront them to each other; it ſeemed almoſt incredible to me, that I had not foreſeen, amongſt all others, this danger alſo, and I repented my imprudence in truſting the Count with the infallible ſigns of a ſecret ſo long concealed by me; I deteſted the effects of

an amorous paſſion, which had blinded me to the ſign of betraying myſelf; and made a firm reſolution, if I could ſurmount this difficulty, never to hazard myſelf again. But unhappy are thoſe who repent too late. While I was making theſe reflections, I ſaw they were in vain; my caſe demanded immediate remedy, nor was there any other reſource than that of obeying without heſitation, otherwiſe I ſhould ſtand ſelf-condemned. I ſat down to his desk, and trembling began to write, while he, walking about, dictated to me. I uſed all my art to alter my character that it might not be known; I flattered myſelf that he had not taken notice of me; but how was I loſt when he ſuddenly drew nigh, and caſt his eyes at the few lines I had ſo badly wrote! You have almoſt ſpoiled, ſaid he, within theſe two years, your writing; for before you left Paris, you did not write ſo bad. I do not know, anſwered I, but my writing was always the ſame: but in my anſwer he ſaw my confuſion. It is not true, replied the Prince, becauſe I have a billet of yours, which you wrote to me the night you was put in priſon at Paris, and the character is quite different; look, and decide

cide it yourſelf. Here he laid before me the four lines I had wrote to him two years before at Paris, and which to that time had never entered my thoughts. My agitation on that fatal night was ſo violent, that it prevented my reflecting on what I was about, nor did I remember to repair the damage I had committed on myſelf. Thus, through want of one neceſſary reflection, my building, in which I ſo much confided, has tumbled to the ground; here I am proved, by my own hand-writing, to be the fugitive of Avignon. At theſe laſt words of the Prince, I know not what paſſed in my ſoul; the pen dropt from my hand, and I remained like one thunder-ſtruck: burſting at laſt into a flood of tears, I threw myſelf at his feet--- Ah! dear Sir, ſaid I, pardon, compaſſion, and pity: I am Miſs D'Arville; too happy if I merit your forgiveneſs, and too unfortunate if, through my concealing ſo long a ſecret ſo important, I merit your anger: if to you I have not before diſcovered myſelf, impute it to my timorous reſpect; and that I now diſcover myſelf, account it more to your love which has caught me in the net, and the obſtinacy of my unmerciful deſtiny, from the zeal, fide-

delity, and love, with which I always adhered to your intereſt; nor was it the love of a libertine that made me fly from the retirement of Avignon, but the ſole deſire of living content: my conduct cannot be blamed, if my ſituation is not diſagreeable to you; and if this is a diſhonour to you, it is in your own power to aboliſh it with my blood; and I ſhall die content, if I die by the hand of him that gave me life: if in this you will not be inhuman to me nor cruel to yourſelf, leave me in my obſcurity, and conceal my birth; permit me to continue in a denial of my ſex, nor will I diſcloſe it to a creature living; I will retire to a place where even you yourſelf will not hear of me: let this, Sir, let this ſecret remain incloſed and buried between the walls of this cabinet, and in the ſame manner I have kept it till now, will I conceal it for the future; it will be enough not to have you for an enemy, and I will ſuffer with patience not to have you as a father: how willingly would I retire for ever from your ſight, could I be ſure that you for ever would preſerve me in your memory! never ſhould I repent that I have ſuffered till now, if I could

but

but return once more to your favour, and merit your pardon.

The Prince was ſtruck dumb at my ſpeech, without any other motion than lifting his hands to his eyes, by way of hiding his tears; for at my words there dropt from his eyes a ſhower of tears, nor did he offer to raiſe me from the ground, but ſuddenly drew aſide the curtain of the Ducheſs's door, ſaying, Madam, come here; behold your child. My child! replied the Ducheſs, then the character of that billet does not deceive us, nor are we wrong in our ſuſpicions. No, Madam, ſaid I, you are not wrong, nor do I wrong you; only give me leave to go to my apartment, and I will produce two letters, wrote by your orders to the governeſs of Avignon and myſelf. There is no occaſion for that, replied the Ducheſs, for nature has always ſpoke to me in your favour; alas! why was I deaf to your voice till now? but well for me that I did not hear it; becauſe, my dear child, it might have been fatal to us both. Here ſhe could hold no longer her tears; ſhe lifted me from the ground, where I had been upon my knees ſo long, then ſqueezed me to her boſom, kiſſing me again and again,

with

with ſuch a rapture of joy, that I feared ſhe would ſwoon in my arms: the Prince, not leſs rejoiced than ſhe, was wrapt in admiration of me. Is it poſſible! ſaid he, at laſt, that from a love ſo unfortunate in the beginning, I have now got a child that makes with her ſpirit my felicity and glory! you, for two years and more diſguiſed in man's habit, in a court where you have gained the hearts of all; and another two years in an army, expoſed to the hardſhips of marching, to the fury of a battle, to the diſorders of the militia, without giving the leaſt ſhadow of your being, or putting your honour in doubt amongſt the libertines of the army! how did you act? my dear child; in what manner did you proceed? who can believe it, when I hardly believe it myſelf? Every one will believe it, Sir, anſwered I, if they reflect, that by regulating our conduct with the dictates of human reaſon, why is not a woman capable to endure hardſhips as well as a man, ſince of women as well as men human nature was the mother? it is not nature which condemns us women to a retired idle life, but the abuſes of the world, not to ſay the tyrannic power of the men, who will not divide

vide their authority with us through fear of becoming our ſlaves: give to a girl the education with which men are brought up, and ſhe alſo will be able to make a glorious figure in the world: thoſe talents which in me education did not ſupply, the neceſſity of my circumſtances did, and the good uſe which I made of my reaſon: I was deſirous of ſeeking my felicity by all thoſe ways, through which I was guided by the gifts of ſpirit, fortune, honeſty, and virtue. To a willing mind nothing is difficult, human life being a mixture of good and evil; it is not enough to have ſpirit to enterpriſe all, but we muſt have alſo courage to ſuffer all.

Much more I would have ſaid in juſtification of myſelf, had not a perſon come in to ſpeak with the Prince, which broke off the diſcourſe at that time.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Behaviour of Madam Cafardo on diſcovering me to be a Woman.

THE perſon that interrupted us was one of the Prince's ſervants, who told the Prince that Count Termes was in the anti-chamber, and deſired the favour to ſpeak with him: this circumſtance gave me great uneaſineſs, as I knew not what effect his preſence might have on me; I might perhaps have been ſo much miſtreſs of myſelf as not to give him the leaſt ſign of my confuſion, but the Count, not knowing what happened to me, and believing me not to be known to my parents, might have been caſually ſurpriſed in a falſity, had curioſity induced them to aſk him if he knew me: in conſequence of what had paſſed between him and me, he would naturally have ſaid, no; and this would have been ſufficient to hurt his reputation, which was now become dear to me as my own; but, luckily for me, the Prince ordering the Count to be introduced, handed me into the Ducheſs's apartment and drew the curtain, ſo that I could hear what was ſaid without being ſeen.

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The Count came in, and assured the Prince, that of the fugitive of Avignon he had no further knowledge than that which was contained in the three letters, and that he had denied the receipt of them, because he thought it inconsistent with the character of a man of honour to do otherwise. Here the Prince interrupted him, by saying, that he was satisfied with what he had said, without his adding any thing more in his vindication; and returning to him his letters, he asked him, how long he should tarry at Versailles? the Count replied, that he intended to depart as soon as conveniently he could for the army in Italy, but that his departure depended upon some particular affairs, nor did he know when they were to be settled. I beg of you, said the Prince, not to set out until I have the pleasure of seeing you again: if I can do any thing to serve you, command me; for as I have given you so much trouble, it will be the greater pleasure to me to make you amends. This kind reception to my lover, was to me an incredible consolation; because as it is natural for our wishes to keep pace with our inclinations, I interpreted it in my own favour.

As

As ſoon as the Count was gone, the Prince called me to him; Well, ſaid he, has it not given you a pleaſure to ſee a lover with whom you have held ſo cloſe a correſpondence? the time will come to render you content; now, not only me, but the Ducheſs, your mother, have juſt motives to be cautious that no one ſhould know you are our child, for at court it is concluded, that the girl flown from Avignon, is daughter to the deceaſed Duke; and you muſt not deny it at preſent, but that the Duke was your real father, leſt you reveal a ſecret which is known between four only, that is, us two, Cafardo, and yourſelf; nor will your conduct in man's apparel be a diſhonour to you, as it will be clear to all that you are a woman, by your laying aſide theſe cloaths, and dreſſing in thoſe of your own ſex: but we muſt ſtill have ſome conſideration for Cafardo, who is partaker of our ſecret, and not irritate her with an affront, by expoſing her reputation to the ſlander of the malicious, in taking from her a huſband by whom ſhe is ſuppoſed to be made a mother; the Ducheſs likewiſe approved of this reflection of the Prince, and it was reſolved between us, that, to ſecure their reputation,

reputation, I ſhould paſs for the daughter of the deceaſed Duke, after I had diſcovered myſelf to be a woman, and not to own myſelf for ſuch until we had found ſome means to preſerve the reputation of my ſuppoſed wife. This project was reaſonable, nor did it give me the leaſt uneaſineſs: the grand thought that diſturbed my mind, was to know how my parents reſolved to proceed concerning my amour with Count Termes, and whether they were agreeable or contrary to my deſires; I was ſenſible, it is true, of the kind reception they gave him that day, but, at the ſame time I was troubled when I reflected on the rigour with which they had treated him, as ſoon as they knew of our correſpondence in Avignon: they were my parents, but they were grandees; and in people of this character, policy often gives law to the moſt tender ſentiments of nature: from the firſt day I beheld the light of this world, they had given me a great proof of their regarding punctilios, by obliging me to keep ſo reſerved, and this was ſufficient to make me dread worſe for the future: beſides this, I was uneaſy in my mind, not knowing how to proceed with the Count; I determined

however not to mention it to him till I firſt knew in what manner they propoſed to diſcover me to the court; I was already certain that he would not leave Paris without my notice, and theſe were the affairs which, as he told the Prince, deferred his journey to Italy. With theſe and the like reflections I paſſed almoſt the whole night without reſt: the next morning Madam Cafardo knocked at the door of my apartment, and acquainted my ſervant that ſhe deſired to ſpeak with me; though I was ſtill in my bed I was no ways alarmed, as I did not in the leaſt doubt but that the Ducheſs had informed her that I was the fugitive of Avignon: I therefore ordered Madam Cafardo to be introduced; but for once I was out in my ſuppoſition, which occaſioned a ridiculous ſcene with Madam Cafardo, who, ſeeing me in bed, in a tranſport of love threw both her arms round my neck, then kiſſed me with ſo much ardour that ſhe almoſt ſuffocated me. I was ſtill confirmed in my opinion that ſhe knew all about me, nor did I make the leaſt reſiſtance to her careſſes: this only ſerved to heighten her amorous wiſhes; Now, ſaid ſhe, kiſſing of me, you crown my hopes, nor can I call

call you any longer ungrateful. I directly roſe up to dreſs myſelf; but how was ſhe amazed when ſhe found me to be a woman like herſelf! ſhe turned pale, loſt her ſpeech, and looked at me with aſtoniſhment, and had almoſt ſwooned away upon the bed: I aſked her with ſurprize, what was the matter? has not the Ducheſs, ſaid I, told you that I am her daughter? You daughter to the Ducheſs! replied ſhe, with more aſtoniſhment than before, you no no more a man, but a woman! you no more my huſband, but my miſtreſs! O God! what will become of me? what of my reputation! it was ſecured enough with the ſole name of being your conſort: alas! this, this is the greateſt extream of human misfortunes that can happen to a woman of credit: this ought to be the laſt day of my life, ſince I have loſt my reputation! .... how cruel have you been to keep me in the dark ſo long! have I then loved you to ſuch a degree, thro' only believing you to be a man? I do not reproach you with favours received at my hands, which have paſſed unregarded; but I reproach you for your inſincerity; having gained from me ſo much knowledge of your own birth,

you have abuſed me by making me languiſh to no effect; and without recompenſing me, in return, with the ſecrets of your heart. — She would have proceeded further had I not interrupted her, by aſſuring her, that we thought more of her reputation than ſhe imagined: the propoſal of the Prince comforted her a little, but ſhe could not forget how ſhe had loved me to no effect; and this perhaps was the only fault that ſhe pardoned againſt her will. I related to her the moſt material part of my adventures, and ſhewed to her the letter ſhe wrote to me when I was in the convent of Avignon, which I always carefully preſerved. Count Termes was next the ſubject of our diſcourſe; this was what I wiſhed for, being deſirous to diſcover from her, what was the opinion of the Ducheſs in regard to my correſpondence with the Count, and what I had to expect; and to my great concern, found that I had very little room to hope for the concurrence of my parents in that affair: ſhe would not tell me any thing for fact, nor would ſhe tell me all, for fear of making me uneaſy: ſhe proteſted that in every thing ſhe would eſpouſe my cauſe, and from that moment declared herſelf

herſelf devoted to my intereſt, flattering herſelf, as ſhe frankly acknowledged, that I being born a Princeſs ſhould be treated as ſuch, and that ſhe expected the honour to ſerve me as ſhe had ſerved my mother. I could not avoid giving her my promiſe, to which her affection for me had already intitled her, and laid me under an obligation to ſerve her: ſhe ſeemed much better ſatisfied with my promiſe than I was with her method of proceeding; our objects were quite different, and in conſequence we could not agree well in our conduct, becauſe I ſincerely loved Count Termes, and my nuptials with him would render me happy; ſhe, who did not care the leaſt about him, truſted her happineſs to ſome better party, who, by making me great, might alſo enlarge her fortune.

CHAP. X.

Methods propoſed to ſave the Reputation of Madam Cafardo.

BEfore that day was paſſed, I took an opportunity to inform the Dutcheſs, my mother, of what had paſſed between Madam Cafardo and me, which diverted her very much; ſhe knew the weakneſs of that Lady, nor could ſhe forbear to condemn it; however, as ſhe was obligated to her, ſhe was under a neceſſity to preſerve her honour, which would be expoſed to ſcandal upon my being diſcovered to the court, and proper means to preſerve it, were not eaſily to be found. The Marquis of * * * *, nephew to the deceaſed Duke, and by whom ſhe had been deluded, was the moſt proper perſon to expect a remedy from, but he was in the dark of what preceeded, and the affair was of ſo delicate a nature, that it was not ſafe to mention it to him.

The Prince let ſome days paſs without coming to any reſolution on this point, and I proceeded as uſual; but the change of ſcene which was to take

place

place in a ſhort time, gave me ſome apprehenſions, and the entire dependance I had upon my parents, deprived me almoſt of my liberty. I was one day permitted for my amuſement, to go in a coach to the fair of St. Germain, where, amongſt other merchants, I ſaw Duli, with his portable ſhop, and directly ordered my ſervant to tell him, that at a certain hour he muſt bring ſome of his goods to my lodging, where there was a gentleman who wanted to purchaſe. At the preciſe hour Duli came, loaded with merchandiſes of various kinds: When he ſaw me he was greatly confuſed, and I, to carry on the joke, told him that it was not me that wanted him, but the Dutcheſs of ****, who had orders from Rome to put him in priſon; he knowing himſelf to be guilty, readily believed what I ſaid, and offered, if I would give him liberty to get out of the way, to make me a preſent of an hundred piſtoles, and a ſuit of the richeſt cloaths he had. The propoſition is good, ſaid I, your trade goes on well if you can afford to ſpend ſo much, rather than be ſent back to your own country. Hearken to me, perhaps what I am going to ſay will be better for you: Give me the hundred

piſtoles

piſtoles you have proffered, and I will add two hundred more to them, and it ſhall be ſent to Madam Galanti your wife, who will pay therewith the remainder of your debts, and you then can return again to your own country, where your family will receive you with open arms. Would heavens pleaſe to grant me this, replied Duli, before I die, I would freely part with all I have in the world, provided I could, with the ſecurity of my liberty, and life, ſpend the remainder of my days with my dear wife and children. There is no danger of either, ſaid I, provided you are willing to return. I then informed him that I had lodged in his wife's houſe at Rome, and that I had acquainted her with his being alive, and had alſo diſpoſed the Ducheſs to aſſiſt him, that he might return to his own country with ſafety. The poor gentleman, at theſe words, ſhed tears of joy, and promiſed to come to me at Verſailles, where I promiſed to preſent him to the Ducheſs, and afterwards to accompany him to Rome, to ſettle his affairs. In the while I gave his wife notice, telling her that ſhe might expect her huſband in a ſhort time. The next day I had anſwer from my kind hoſt at

Venice,

Venice, concerning his waiting-maid; he told me he would come in perſon to receive Roſaura, for whom he profeſſed a particular affection, and that he would keep her from Venice till ſuch time as the memory of her bad conduct was dropt.

I communicated to Roſaura the contents of the letter, which ſhe read with tears of joy, on ſeeing herſelf treated with ſo much regard by a man whom ſhe had uſed with the higheſt ingratitude. Thus, within the compaſs of a few weeks, I had the ſatisfaction to reſtore to a wife her huſband, and to a maſter a ſervant whom he regardedas his child; and I had reaſon to rejoice that it was in my power to be grateful to two perſons who had each of them been ſerviceable to me in Italy, and to whom I might have recourſe in any misfortune whatſoever. To thoſe who were my real friends, I ever took a ſatisfaction in being grateful; and in the choice of my friends I always made virtue my guide, for I held it as an eſtabliſhed rule of my conduct, that where there is no virtue there can be no friendſhip, and that the union which is made by vice, intereſt, and paſſion, ſoon diſſolves, nor does it finiſh but with our ruin. In the

mean

mean time the Prince had found out a method to preſerve the reputation of Madam Cafardo, and this was to marry her to Mr. Befone, giving out at the ſame time that they had been married for ſome years, but that their marriage was kept a ſecret through fear of the deceaſed Duke, who, being very paſſionate, would have reſented it much, becauſe Mr. Befone had refuſed to marry the daughter of one of his dependents, under pretence that he would always remain a bachelor; this taken for truth, the remainder would readily be credited, by ſaying, that Madam Cafardo being with child by Mr. Befone her huſband, could not confeſs it for fear of expoſing him to the Duke's anger, therefore begged that I would paſs for her huſband till time would permit them to publiſh the truth. The moſt difficult point was to perſuade Mr. Befone to the match; but he, by the favour of the Prince, expected ſoon to make his fortune, and with that view he conſented to the deſires of my parents; and Madam Cafardo being uſed to have huſbands that had no great affection for her, and who treated her as a wife only in outward appearance, the affair was ſettled in a few days, and

their

their nuptials were publiſhed as if they had been celebrated ſix years before; at the ſame time it was publickly proclaimed that the deceaſed Duke was my father, and that I was no longer Count Richard but Miſs D'Arville. The plauſible appearance of theſe two extraordinary accidents were very favourable to Madam Cafardo: the transformation of my ſex engroſſed ſo much the attention of the public, that they entertained not the leaſt doubt of the affair of Madam Cafardo. At court I was principally the ſubject of diſcourſe, and they were continually repeating my adventures, praiſing my ſpirit, and placing me amongſt the heroines of my ſex; there were but few who by their own account did not ſuſpect me to be a woman, even the King confeſſed to have admired me, and deſired to ſee me, ſaying that he would not confer his favours in vain, but would replace them by others more agreeable to my ſex. Theſe encomiums flattered my vanity; but all this while my parents never mentioned to me the name of Count Termes, and this ſilence filled my heart with grief; from that day he had viſited the Prince I had not ſeen him, and therefore judged it proper to acquaint him

him by letter with what had happened to me, that he might not be uneasy or surprised at the public talk of my being a woman; Duli, who often visited me, was the person that carried my letter, and brought me the answer, in which the Count, with honour and sincerity, trusted every thing to my prudence, and encouraged me by promising to be faithful. The Duchess every day detained me some hours with herself, to hear from me the particulars of my adventures, and I always endeavoured to introduce in our discourse something concerning Count Termes, that I might know the sentiments of her heart; I spoke for the most part in general terms of esteem and honour, but coming to the particular of marriage, she told me, that children in the choice of a partner for life, especially those of the nobility, ought to be guided more by policy than passion. What consequences could I expect from these maxims, that would not be sorrowful and dreadful to me? while my parents were silent on that point, if my fear agitated me, still I flattered myself with some hopes; but when they spoke in that manner, I no longer doubted my fate. In comparison of this I reputed

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my paſt misfortunes a felicity; and although in Avignon the retirement of a cloyſter was irkſome to me, I was now almoſt in a ſituation to deſire it; and rather than be married againſt my inclination, through motives of policy, I would have ventured to deliver myſelf from that danger by flight; nor had I leſs courage at this time than formerly, but an action of that ſort would now have appeared criminal in the eyes of all the world, becauſe another flight would not be juſtified as the firſt had been by my not knowing my parents. With tears I lamented the unhappineſs of my fate, but I was conſcious in myſelf that I had not deviated in my conduct from the ſtrict rules of virtue, nor by any criminal action merited ſuch ill fortune; and I am fully convinced, that, to thoſe who think as they ought, a reflection of this ſort will always afford ſatisfaction.

CHAP. XI.

I am presented to the King in Woman's Dress, and am flattered with the Hopes of my Nuptials with Count Termes.

THE day was now arrived in which the Duchess was to present me to the King, and every thing was ready prepared that I should be presented in woman's apparel: as the court in general endeavoured to outvie each other in grandeur, Madam Cafardo, with two of the Duchess's waiting-maids, had the trouble to dress me as was requisite for my appearance; and I must say for the glory of the men, that I left their cloaths with an incredible grief: some years ago, the least of my thoughts was to dress myself, because I could do it in a few minutes, and without assistance; but that day I was obliged to get out of my bed at sun-rise, and not move from the toilet till two o'clock.

I well know that the looking-glass is a great inticement to women to lose their time, because it serves to feed their vanity; but I did not find it any ways attractive to me, nor did I desire it; for in my manner of thinking, my

my own vanity ſerved me for a continual torment: the number of jewels and flowers which they uſed to beautify my face and dreſs my hair, appeared to me more like baſeneſs than pride, as it ſhewed, that all our beauty depended upon ornament: the rich habit in which I was dreſſed, ſeemed to me a very great incumbrance; nor could I underſtand the uſe of a train of twenty yards more than was neceſſary; nor of a robe that has ten yards of circumference and two of diameter. The time I ſpent at my toilet was not loſt, for it was moſtly ſpent in theſe and the like reflections. While they were dreſſing of me, it was their buſineſs to ſet me off to the beſt advantage; but when dreſſed, it belonged to me to adapt myſelf to the manners becoming my ſex, that I might not be laughed at; the actions of a man were ſo natural to me, that I thought it would be impoſſible to act otherwiſe; dreſſed in a manner to me quite new and forgotten; I knew not where to keep my hands, or in what manner to demean myſelf, and it happened more than once, that in offering a ſalute, I raiſed my hand to my head, thinking that I had my hat on: I was obliged to apply to the looking-

glaſs in all my actions, that I might not appear ridiculous at court; andwhat uneaſineſs did this application coſt me! yet it pleaſed my vanity a little, for in that dreſs I thought I looked moſt amiable: if I ever enjoyed agreeably four or five hours together unmixed with ſorrow, I believe it was theſe I ſpent that morning in dreſſing myſelf. When I was adorned from head to foot, I went out of my room, like a ſhip new rigged out of the harbour, to be preſented to the King by the Ducheſs my mother, through a concourſe of people on each ſide gazing at and admiring me. The King receiv'd me with great affability, and amongſt other things told me, that having had courage to make two campaigns before I got a huſband, I had made a fortune ſuitable for a Marſhall: I took this as a joke, but time will prove that it was not meant as ſuch. This viſit being ended, I paſſed the remainder of the day in receiving the viſits of my friends, and the relations of the Ducheſs my mother, with thoſe of the deceaſed Duke, who paſſed for my father, amongſt whom came the Princeſs of * * * *, his ſiſter, and the Marquis of * * * *, her ſon, who was the occaſion of my troubles with Madam Cafardo:

they

they both saluted me with venom on their lips, which I presently discovered, perfect as they were in the art of dissimulation: they supposing me to be the Duke's real daughter, believed I should claim part of his estate, because he died without a will; nor did he ever deny but that I was his child, and always supplied the expences of my maintainance.

The Duchess and the Prince, whose chief aim was the advancement of my fortune, reconciled me to the nearest relations of the Duke, and who possessed the greatest part of his estate. In these and the like occupations I passed two days, without even having time to reflect upon my situation; the next morning Madam Cafardo came running into my room, and transported with joy, I have good news for you, Miss, said she to me, at least I flatter myself that it is such, for I am seldom wrong in my conjectures; the Duchess, your mother, is at present with the Prince, and I have heard them speak of you several times; last night Lady Marchioness of * * *, who for several days past has been confidant to the Duchess, told me, for certain, that in a few days you were to be married; besides, a ser-

vant is dispatched to Paris, in the Prince's name, to desire Count Termes to come as soon as possible to Versailles: what can you desire more? to be sure they have appointed him for your husband, and in a few days you will be happy. Much more she added to persuade me of the truth of her conjectures, and as she was a woman well experienced at court, and, as I may say, understood things by the air, all this seemed to combine in my favour; but my heart foreboded something of which I could not understand the mystery, and to be thoroughly chearful I must have done violence to my conscience.

CHAP. XII.

Obstacles, worse than any yet mentioned, to my Nuptials with Count Termes.

MAdam Cafardo had mentioned to me Lady Marchioness of * * *, strict confidant of the Duchess, my mother; this being a person who now makes her first appearance, it is proper that I should give some account of her: This lady was born in Milan, and came with her brother, the Marquis of * * *, on a party of pleasure to Paris: her agreeableness and affability had rendered her a great favourite at court,

court; and her brother, though of a character quite different from hers, did not want means to make himself merit esteem: in fact, they both cut such a figure at court, that I may say, they were an honour to their country. Seeing themselves so well respected, they could not leave it, and 'twas above a year that from day to day, they continued deferring their departure. Amongst the acquaintances of the Lady Marchioness, my mother had the first place; and this their tenderness to each other I attributed to that natural inclination which most have to be kind to their own country-folks in foreign parts; and as my mother was an Italian by birth, and the Lady Marchioness an Italian likewise, I did not wonder at their familiarity: but it proceeded from another principle, then not foreseen by me; and if I had foreseen it, I could not have found a remedy. Let me return to Count Termes, who, as soon as he received notice from the Prince, came post-haste to Versailles, impatient to see me: I knew nothing of his arrival till after dinner; I was called to the Duchess's apartment, where unexpectedly I found him with the Prince, and the Duchess, Lady Mar-

Marchioneſs of ***, and her brother. At the ſight of this aſſembly I know not what were the ſentiments of my heart; the movements of it were ſo confuſed, turbulent, and violent, that I could not reflect properly on any thing; my ſoul, full of the news given me by Madam Cafardo, would yet hope that this was the moment appointed by heaven to compleat my felicity; but the little dependence I had in my good fortune, made me apprehenſive of the worſt. Mutual compliments of civility being over, the Prince, turning firſt towards the Count and then towards me, My children, ſaid he to us, for ſuch I can call you becauſe I love you as a father, I have called you both, to give you at the ſame time an equal teſtimony of my love. Theſe words were ſufficient to make my heart leap, and my eyes ſparkle with joy; I caſt them modeſtly upon the ground, after I had looked two or three times at the Count to let him know we were nigh being happy: his gravity was little different from mine; and although we had more motives to hope than to fear, yet we looked like two criminals at the bar, waiting till our ſentence of condemnation was read. In proof of

my

my love, proceeded the Prince, I will make you content; Count Termes has merited it, by that prudent and honourable regard he has had for Miſs D'Arville; and you, Miſs, have merited it, by that regard you have had to your honour in all your proceedings ſince your birth, and to my perſon alſo: the reward I am going to propoſe, is a marriage agreeable to the Ducheſs and to me, and to the whole court, and will eſtabliſh your fortunes for ever. What could I deſire more, to make me believe that I was then arrived to the height of my felicity? I lifted my eyes from the ground to fix them on Count Termes, and they met his which expreſſed equal joy on his ſide: I had almoſt fallen on the chair that ſtood behind my back, unable to ſtand upon my feet through exceſſive joy; the modeſt and compoſed behaviour of the Count, encouraged me to imitate him; but I wiſhed for the hour to be at liberty, to enjoy the violent tranſports of nature. Your ſubmiſſion, your honeſty, and prudence, proceeded the Prince, makes me hope that you will obey theſe my deſires, and I ſhall be pleaſed that theſe nuptials are concluded before they are publiſhed: you then,

Sir,

Sir, give your hand to Lady Marchioneſs of *** ; and the Marquis, her brother, his hand to Miſs D'Arville ; that at preſent theſe nuptials may be authenticated with my preſence.

From a beginning ſo promiſing, who would ever expect ſuch an unfortunate concluſion ? my tranſport of joy was ſuddenly changed into the agony of death ; the tears ran from my eyes, for I was not miſtreſs enough of myſelf to check them ; even the Count himſelf changed colour, but his courage was not daunted ; the duty I owed to my parents commanded my ſilence, but he might freely vent his paſſion, and he ſpoke in a manner which, if it did not free me from my grief, at leaſt left me in a ſtate not to be deſperate. Your Highneſs, replied he, does me an honour ſuperior to my merit, and I hope this lady will not be offended if I refuſe to take her in this manner at firſt ſight, without giving her firſt ſome reaſons which render me unworthy of her perſon. Your reaſons, proceeded the Prince, interrupting the Count, muſt be reduced to one only, that is, you love Miſs D'Arville, but Miſs D'Arville cannot be yours, and as long as I am alive ſhe never ſhall. She will not,

replied

replied the Count, daringly, becauſe your Highneſs is her maſter; I am alſo maſter of my own will, to aſſure you, that if Miſs D'Arville will not be mine, neither will I be any others. Well, replied the Prince, ſince it is ſo, I have no other buſineſs with you. Here the Count made him a low bow, and giving me a look that penetrated to my ſoul, without ſaying more, departed; ſoon after I alſo was harſhly bade to leave the Ducheſs, and retired to my room to give vent to my grief, which I thought could not finiſh but with my life. The predictions of Madam Cafardo were now explained; the tenderneſs of my parents, and my own hopes, even my own heart, foretold the truth, when it perſuaded me not to diſcover my ſecret till firſt I had ſecured my felicity: why was I not yet a fearful fugitive, wandering in mens cloaths? at leaſt I ſhould have no one to force my inclinations: what ſignifies knowing the grandeur of my birth, when that to me was a precipice, from which falling, I knew not how to riſe again, becauſe my parents themſelves made my fall more dangerous? ſhould I, to be born great, abandon a lover, choſen by my own free will, given to me by

my

my ſuffering, and to me riſen more worthy than ever by the undauntedneſs with which he aſſured me, in the face of my father, of his inviolable fidelity? it would have been better for me to be born in low fortune, ſince grandeur is a ſlavery, and declares itſelf an enemy to reaſon, obliging the great to be ungrateful: to be grateful to Count Termes, muſt I diſobey my parents, darken my reputation, and expoſe my honour to new dangers, and at the ſame time reap no reward but the diſapprobation of the unreaſonable and ill-judging world? it is better, ſaid I to myſelf, to die with grief, than live diſhonoured and blameable; and amongſt this confuſion of affections, I knew not how to reſolve. All my reflections finiſhed in tears, ſighs, and groans, ſufficient to appeaſe the rage of a tyger; but unavailable to the force of that cruel and unwearied deſtiny which reſerved me ſtill for ſomething worſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

New Hopes of my Nuptials with Count Termes.

IN the moſt critical circumſtances of my life my heart was never daunted, becauſe experience had taught me, by ſome means or other, to hope for a remedy; but for what my father propoſed I could find none, nor could I comprehend the meaning of my parents averſion to my nuptials with Count Termes; and if Madam Cafardo could not inform me, to whom elſe could I have recourſe? I paſſed all that night in theſe and the like reflections, without getting a moment's reſt, and waiting with impatience for day-light that I might gain from her ſome knowledge of this intricate affair: ſhe loved me, and ſhe knew my tenderneſs for the Count, and I ſuppoſed her to be acquainted with all the private concerns of my parents, as ſhe had been partaker of the greateſt, which was that of my birth. At break of day I got up, reſolving to go to her that moment, but was prevented by her coming into my room: Be chearful, Miſs, be chearful, ſaid ſhe, I have got good news for you, and expect before night to have better.

At theſe words my grief vaniſhed in an inſtant, and I flattered myſelf with the hopes that my parents had changed their opinion. Count Termes, added ſhe, will this morning be declared a Brigadier; his promotion was appointed laſt night, and the King in perſon will communicate it to him in a few hours: this advancement to him is as honourable as it was ſudden and unexpected; I do not ſay that he does not merit it from the crown, but there are officers at court who have been in the army more campaigns than he, and therefore will look at him with envy for this promotion, for which he is indebted to the Prince, your father; and I imagine, by his making this intereſt for the Count, he reſolves to give him to you for a huſband: I know that at firſt he had ſome repugnance, but this makes me judge that it proceeded from the Count's inferiority to you in point of fortune: the King by preferring him makes him your equal, and I hold for certain that before night it will be publickly reported that you are intended for him. Heaven grant it may be ſo, ſaid I, in my heart. The words of Madam Cafardo appeared very probable, and I immediately remembered the

the words ſpoken to me by the King, which were, " that I ought to have nothing leſs than a Marſhall for my huſband." I was now convinced that his words carried a meaning with them, for there was but little diſtance between the rank of a Brigadier and a Marſhall. Nevertheleſs I had ſeveral ſcruples in my mind which I could not eaſily overcome: If my father, ſaid I, had an inclination to ſerve the Count, why did he yeſterday, in my preſence, want him to marry Lady ***, and on his denial mortify him ſo much? O Miſs, replied ſhe, the reaſon I can eaſily tell; your father aims to make you great, the Marquis of *** is about purchaſing a principality in Italy, which undoubtedly he will obtain; in conſequence of this your father intended, by making him your huſband, to make you a Princeſs: but he has now changed his opinion, or elſe he is unwilling to thwart your inclinations; and by promoting Count Termes deſigns to render him worthy of your perſon, without which he never would conſent to the match: he is you know at preſent only a cadet, noble indeed by birth, but not wealthy, and his eſtate encumbered with the debts of

his father: these are things that strike at first sight, and to understand the intentions of the Prince there is no occasion for any great policy. Madam Cafardo would have said a great deal more, but I was already sufficiently interested in his favour to credit the truth of what she said. I shall leave it to them who are sensible what love is, to conceive with what impatience I attended the event of that memorable day, full of the sweet ideas of a pleasure I foresaw drawing nigh me; 'tis impossible to express the agreeable sensations of my heart, when I reflected on the particular favour which the Count was to receive that morning from the King; I knew that the Count would present himself to the King either in his going or coming from the chapel, and was desirous to be present at that juncture, but chose to be in private that I might not betray the movements of my heart. I studied for some time whether there was any place in the gallery from which unseen I might observe their proceedings, and luckily recollected, that in the gallery which was near my apartment, there were some windows, from which I could look into the hall which led to the chapel; this stratagem pleased

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me greatly, but happy would it have been for me if I had not been so hasty to put it in practice, for I should not then have heard, to my extream anguish, my own condemnation.

CHAP. XIV.

Count Termes, for Love of me, rejects the Honours proffered to him by the King.

I Was not certain whether Count Termes had received any notice concerning the honour he was to receive at the audience of the King that morning, for from that day I had seen him in Janeson's room, in the Bastile, I never spoke to him; twice I saw him in the presence of my parents, but seeing him then only added to my confusion; and after the declaration made to him by my father, we dared not to write to each other, there being a strict guard over us both, and the least correspondence would have been construed a crime: with this uncertainty in my soul, and with a book in my hand, under pretence of reading, I went immediately from my room to the gallery beforementioned; I here found a window which opened to the anti-chamber, but which at this time was blocked up on the inner side by the tapestry

which adorned the hall; in this I discovered a small opening, thro' which I could see and hear what passed in the hall, without being observed by any one: judging this the most proper place, I waited in expectation of what was to happen: I soon fixed my eyes upon the Count, who was surrounded by a multitude of friends who were congratulating him on his good fortune: the matter, thought I, to myself, is now manifestly past all doubt; Count Termes is to be a Brigadier, and will then be my husband; if he had merited the resentment of my father he would not have been distinguished in this manner, and it is evident, that my unhappiness proceeded from my own silly apprehensions. I was reflecting in this manner when there arose a sudden whispering, which was followed immediately by a profound silence, (a certain sign that the King was drawing nigh) at first I thought the King looked all round for him, at least my love flattered me that he did; when he distinguished him amongst the multitude, being directed to him by my father, Sir, said he, we have thought proper to do justice to your merits, by rewarding your past services; you are

appointed

appointed a Brigadier in our army which is at preſent in Bohemia, for which place you muſt depart as ſoon as poſſible, your preſence being neceſſary there. Theſe words were to my heart ſo many wounds; do they intend by this, ſaid I, an honour to Count Termes, or a chaſtiſement to our affection? I then perceived why my father intereſted himſelf in his promotion, which was to tear him from my heart by ſending him from all France, and that to conceal his inhumanity he had artfully contrived, by advancing him him to that poſt, to ſeparate us from each other: this was daubing with honey the edge of that gilded cup out of which they gave me poiſon to drink; his diſtance might be fatal to my love, becauſe he might forget me; and my parents might with leſs difficulty force my inclinations. How many things paſſed in my mind at that time, for which I was fully perſuaded 'twould be impoſſible to find a remedy! Count Termes having accepted this poſt, would be obliged to obey; and he, obeying the King's orders, was loſt to me for ever. This reflection alone was ſufficient to ſtrike me dead, but curioſity ſtill induced me to ſee how this

diſmal

diſmal tragedy was to end: Count Termes ſeemed not to be in the leaſt daunted at the King's words, and this his reſolution increaſed my confuſion; I thought that he was like the generality of the men, and that his ambition prevailed over his love. Poor women! ſaid I, in my heart, we are the idols of theſe ungrateful men, yet, at the firſt blaze of their good fortune, we fall the unpitied victims of their ambition. With this ſuſpicion I did injuſtice to a lover who had given me a thouſand proofs of his fidelity; but where is that woman who is guided by reaſon when ſhe thinks herſelf treated with contempt? My King, replied Count Termes, with an undauntedneſs that ſurpriſed me, my King, you ſee at your feet the moſt unfortunate of your ſubjects, becauſe I dare not refuſe the honour you do me, and ſtill am under a neceſſity not to accept it; the intereſt of my family obliges me to implore from your Majeſty a diſmiſſion, ſo far am I from the power of accepting in your troops ſuch an honourable poſt; but as ſoon as my family affairs permit me, I will not fail to ſerve your Majeſty to the laſt drop of my blood; but muſt now do violence to myſelf, and

grant

grant to others that glory which in ten campaigns I have made it my ſtudy to merit.

At this ſpeech, little expected by any perſon there, my father ſeemed to be vexed; but the King anſwered him in obliging terms, ſaying, that in his intentions to ſerve him, he would by no means be a prejudice to him, and that he was entirely at liberty to manage for the beſt the affairs of his family; but that at any time, or upon any occaſion hereafter, he ſhould find him in the ſame diſpoſitions to do him good. Diſſolved in tears I retired to my apartment, ſaying to myſelf, what have I ſeen! what have I heard! Count Termes loves me to ſuch exceſs, as to give up the poſſeſſion of an immenſe fortune, rather than abandon me; but wretched me, what event can I expect by ſeeing him ruined through my means? I tremble with horror, even now, at the remembrance of thoſe tumults which aroſe that day in my heart, the confuſions of affection, compaſſion, honour, love, and gratitude. The Count renounced his advancement, that he might not be ſeparated from me; and what conſolation did this undeniable proof of his tenderneſs give me? if

my

my parents ſhould ſtill perſiſt not to let me have him, at leaſt, thought I, he will be nigh me, his preſence will be ſome comfort to me, and he himſelf will be a witneſs of my fidelity: this was the raving of my paſſion, blinded by the real wiſhes of my heart; but it vaniſhed like a dream when oppoſed with the directions of reaſon: what ſignified the Count's being near me, when his preſence would ſerve only for a continual torment to me? the ſon of an illuſtrious but reduced family, without wealth, without employ, without hope; what figure could he make in the world? and how could I flatter myſelf that he would ever be my huſband! his paſſion for me has ruined him, and in ſtriving to convince me of his love, he has overthrown all the proſpects of our nuptials; and thoſe very methods we have taken to inſure our felicity, haſtened the unhappineſs of us both. Notwithſtanding that before his refuſal of advancement I trembled with the apprehenſions of his accepting it, yet ſo ſtrange were the fluctuations of my mind, that I now looked upon his denial as a ſtep too dangerous, not to ſay real madneſs; and I thought that if I had

had been at his ears, I would have counſelled him againſt it; and what would I not have then given to recall his words! I ſhould have been willing for him to go not only to Bohemia, but even to America, had he left me the hopes of being one day or other his wife. As much as I loved Count Termes, I do not bluſh to confeſs, that in renouncing for my ſake ſuch an illuſtrious fortune, he did not act like a man of ſenſe, and I ſhould have been more blameable than himſelf to juſtify his indirect conduct; he behaved wrong, and I likewiſe did wrong in approving it at firſt: it would have been better for us both, that he had not proceeded in that manner; the wound was mortal, and beyond the power of a remedy; he underſtood it in a different light, and I was not at liberty to adviſe him otherwiſe. My parents ſtill continued to treat me with all the tokens of affection, but of him they did not mention one word; and Madam Cafardo confeſſed that ſhe could not gain the leaſt light in this intricate affair. My marriage with the Marquis of * * * was ſoon after held for certain all over the court, without one word more of it being mentioned to me; this

myſterious

myſterious ſilence encreaſed the trouble of my ſoul, which was always in fear, not knowing what might be the event: in the interim a report prevailed that my mother, the Ducheſs, was with child; and it ſeemed to Madam Cafardo, and myſelf alſo, that the pregnancy of the Ducheſs might better my condition, ſhe not having any children by the Duke, her firſt huſband, and not being ſure of having any by the Prince, being ſo far advanced in age, ſhe looked upon me as the only heir to her eſtate, and principal ſupporter of her family; ſhe knew by her own experience, how diſagreeable it was to be married for ſole policy, and wiſhed me to be married to my equal, but without letting the world know I was her child: the Marquiſs of ***, ſhe thought more ſuitable to me than Count Termes; becauſe being an Italian, he could conduct me immediately to Italy, where no enquiry would be made about my birth: to remain in France with Count Termes, her reputation would be expoſed to continual danger: if ſhe proved with child, all theſe things would change their effect; and if it ſhould be a boy, her affections and hopes would all center in him,

and

and ſhe in conſequence would permit me to marry as I pleaſed; but neither ſhe nor I apprehended the real cauſe of my parents diſapprobation of giving me to Count Termes.

CHAP. XV.

Real Motives for which my Parents would not give me in Marriage to Count Termes.

FROM all I have yet ſaid, no one will be able to gueſs what were the motives that induced my parents not to conſent to my nuptials with Count Termes: of this obſcurity I am not the fault, for I write my adventures in the order as they befel me, and myſelf was then puzzled to find out their reaſons. Amongſt an hundred things which came into my mind, each had its probability; but after thinking whole nights and whole days, I knew no more than at firſt; and if my mother had not explained it to me, I ſhould never have found it out.

She found me one day with a book in my hand, and ſeriouſly reflecting upon what I read; ſhe aſked me, what book I was reading? to which a ſudden thought came in my head, and I

anſwered her, it was my own adventures. How! added the Ducheſs, I never knew that your adventures were printed. So ſaying, ſhe took the book out of my hand, and looking at it, found in the title page, The Daughter Married to her Diſlike; ſhe ſmiled as ſoon as ſhe ſaw it, and returning it to me, Ah! my child, ſaid ſhe, comparing this book to yourſelf, you do wrong to me and offend yourſelf; I know you have propoſed the nuptials with Count Termes, for the only end of your conduct; but I aſk you, if theſe nuptials will illuſtrate your conduct, or diſhonour it? remember that here you marry a cadet, poor in fortune, who has renounced the honours he actually had and what he might expect hereafter in the army: we conſult your honour more than your fortune; to be great, it is enough you are virtuous, but your virtue is not ſufficient to make you appear honourable; the opinion of the world is guided by appearances, and whatever you have done ſince your flight from the convent of Avignon diſhonours you much, becauſe the world ſuppoſes you have done it for the ſake of Count Termes, and a thouſand

ſand ſtories are ſpread about this affair that offend our glory, and your virtue: by marrying a perſon for whom they believe you have loſt your honour, it will juſtify the ſlander of the malicious, and blemiſh your reputation for ever: this is the reaſon for which we have appointed the Marquis of *** to be your huſband, and if we had omitted to tell you of it before, our motives proceeded from tenderneſs: reflect, Miſs, that honour alone makes us truly noble; and that this might not be prejudiced in the fooliſh opinion of the world, I ſacrifice to it the tenderneſs of a mother, in ſuffering it to be believed that you are not my daughter. Imitate my example, by ſacrificing alſo your paſſion to your honour; and if though contrary to my inclination, I loſe the pleaſure of owning you for my daughter, you likewiſe, by eſpouſing for your honour the Marquis of ***, ought not to repute yourſelf married to your diſlike. At this diſcourſe of my mother I was like one rouſed from a dream; her maxims were not reaſonable in all reſpects, and I could readily have given a proper anſwer, but the danger of my honour, which ſhe painted as evident and una-

voidable, called up immediately all my reflections; I asked her, with an air of surprize, what the world could say in regard to my love for Count Termes, that, for the sake of my reputation, I should be obliged to forget him, and not have him for a husband? What do you say? replied the Duchess, nothing less surprised than me, be not anxious to know it, for it will terrify you. Certainly, said I, if I must forget Count Termes, it is proper at least I should know the reason why; and if you, Madam, love me as your child, you will not conceal it from me. To satisfy you, replied she, I will tell you, but give me your word not to be disturbed at it: The malicious have taken the liberty to say, that Count Termes in honour is obliged to marry you; without my speaking more at large, are you sensible of the consequence of it? this is not all; for they say, that it is no wonder the daughter should imitate the mother, who was with child of you before she was married; and these scandalous insinuations are already in the mouths of the public; the Marquis of B. C. nephew to the deceased Duke, and your supposed cousin, has caused this report to propagated by some of

his

his emiſſaries, in order to exclude you from any title to the Duke's eſtate, and to make you paſs, in the opinion of all, for my child, and by this means diſhonours both the daughter and the mother: this, Miſs, is not an imaginary invention, and you muſt, for the future, lay aſide the tenderneſs of a lover: your nuptials with Count Termes would not be leſs fatal to your honour than to mine; the ſchemes of thoſe villainous wretches muſt be countermined more with deeds than with words, neither will it be improper to let ſome months paſs before your marriage, as it would clearly manifeſt your honeſty, and by your marriage with ſome other perſon, it will appear, that all your ſuppoſed paſſion for Count Termes, and the reports which have been ſpread concerning you, are only the effects of downright malice. Recollect yourſelf, my dear child, and follow the advice of your affectionate parents; you ought to regard my honour as much as I do yours, and by marrying the Marquis of ***, you ought not to count yourſelf in the number of thoſe girls who are married to their diſlike; nor can you do it without doing me an injury. With this the Ducheſs left me, but I

hardly knew where I was, ſo great was my agitation and confuſion: while I appeared in the perſonage of a man, I had always this thorn in my heart, and my honour, as cloſely as I looked after it, I thought was never ſecure; ſcandal and detraction generally aim their darts againſt innocence, and whenever a woman is perſecuted by the malicious, you may reaſonably conclude her to be virtuous: I was amazed to think that the Marquis B. C. had ſcandalized a perſon that never had in any manner injured him; I trembled leſt Count Termes ſhould by ſome means underſtand who was the cauſe of this infamy, and reſent it as an offence to his reputation and love, two points extreamly ſuſceptible of injuries in a man of honour, and might reſolve on ſome deſperate revenge, which would compleat his own ruin, and diſcredit me. With theſe diſmal apprehenſions in my mind, I would gladly have adviſed him to ſuffer and be ſilent, that worſe might not happen; but the Ducheſs ordered me not to give him the leaſt hint of it, and, according to my maxims, a mother ought to be obeyed; my ſituation therefore was deplorable and difficult. Being perſuad-

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ed by ſo many reaſons, I thought it very proper to give over all hopes of my nuptials with Count Termes; but could I have courage to pierce his heart, by giving myſelf to another? or could I attempt to preſerve myſelf for him at the coſt of diſobeying my parents, and ſacrificing my honour? I thought both theſe things equally impoſſible in my circumſtances, but one or the other I was obliged to embrace. The Ducheſs after this beginning did not ceaſe to teize me every day on that head; ſhe alſo reſpecting Count Termes in her heart, would have been grieved to have ſeen him ruined and unhappy upon my account, and begged that I would adviſe him to marry the Marchioneſs M. and promiſe him, that ſhe would make intereſt at court that he might get his poſt again. Thus was I obliged to act a moſt afflicting part in a ſcene which, though only repreſented in a tragedy, would have coſt me a river of tears; what trouble muſt it then give me, when compelled to repreſent it in perſon? I know not whether the obedience of a child, or the tenderneſs of a lover, determined me to comply with my mother: I promiſed to obey her; but with how many

ſighs,

ſighs and tears did I conſent to her intreaties, ſo contrary to the inclination of my amorous heart! to be myſelf the bearer of this cruel meſſage was a ſevere trial, from which nothing leſs could deliver me than that principle of virtue which rendered me ſuperior to all dangers, eſpecially thoſe which concerned my honour. We reſolved between us, that the next day, when Count Termes was to pay me a viſit, I ſhould embrace that opportunity to perſuade him, with all my authority, to perform what my honour, the honour of my mother, and his own fortune required. Till that fatal hour arrived, it is impoſſible to conceive the agitation and grief under which I laboured! the ſtep I was compelled to make, be the conſequence what it would, becauſe my reputation was in danger, and my word was paſs'd to the Ducheſs: I could not know what the Count would reſolve in conſequence of my propoſal, neither did I know for certain the true ſentiments of my own heart upon this intricate point; my love deſired he ſhould not obey, my virtue deſired he ſhould be obedient; but whatever it was to be, in what manner could I regulate my conduct after he had reſolv-

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ed to his liking? in every suppoſition, gratitude commanded me to love him; but how could I love him, if I gave my hand to another huſband without his meriting ſuch proof of my ingratitude? In my ſituation I could determine no otherwiſe than to petition his love in behalf of my rival, and preſerve myſelf for him by not engaging in wedlock with any other: to this reſolution I was prompted not only by my affection for him, but alſo by my honour; for I reflected that, in ſpite of all calumny, the world would be clearly convinced of the ſincerity of my heart, when they ſaw me carry my offering with me to the grave: this principle being planted in my breaſt, to deliver me from the importunities of my parents, who ſtill wanted me to marry; therefore, to preſerve myſelf faithful to Count Termes, to contradict the ſcandal of the world, there was no better ſtep for me to take, than, by withdrawing myſelf intirely from the leaſt connection with the men, to retire and end my days in a cloyſter.

CHAP

CHAP. XVI.

My Resolution to retire into a Cloyster, and my Aunt's Opinion quite contrary to mine.

NOW am I in my thoughts arrived at a place to which six years before I intended never to return. When I projected that memorable flight from my retirement of Avignon, who would have told me, that I should one day or other wish for that solitude and quiet which I willingly quitted with indignation and horror, and became a wanderer rather than live in subjection. I then looked upon my unknown parents to be cruel in the highest degree, because they wanted to confine me in a cloyster; and now, had they even consented to confine me in one for life, I should have thought it a token of their affection, and the most prudent method to preserve my honour unsullied, and my future life contented and happy. Thus do our inclinations and tempers vary according to the variation of circumstances, times, and places, and every sensible person will readily agree, that a material change in matters

ters of importanc, will fully juſtify a change in our reſolutions.

When I deſpiſed the retirement of a cloyſter, and now when I even earneſtly deſired it, I am convinced in my own mind, to have done each time no more than what was right; my circumſtances then gave me reaſon to deſire my liberty, but my preſent circumſtances laid me under a neceſſity to ſacrifice my liberty to my honour and quiet, which we ought to regard beyond every other felicity in this miſerable life: they certainly are moſt prudent who regulate with reaſon; but circumſtances changing, the ſame principles of reaſon will not always be found conſiſtent with prudence.

Being fully determined in my heart to end my life in a cloyſter, in caſe I could not otherwiſe render myſelf content, I thought at leaſt to be leſs uneaſy in my mind, and I did not doubt but my parents would conſent to this my deſire, knowing this to have been their intention from the day of my birth: the moſt difficult matter which now remained, was to ſpeak to Count Termes; I employed the remainder of that day, and the following night, in diſpoſing myſelf for that ſharp trial, ſtudying

dying with myself even the words with which I was to perſuade him.

The next morning, every perſon that came into my room with any meſſage, made me ſhudder with fear, dreading that fatal hour in which I was to ſee the Count: amongſt the reſt Madam Cafardo came to me towards twelve o'clock; Do you know, ſaid ſhe, who is coming to pay you a viſit! Count Termes, ſaid I very readily, becauſe his arrival ran ſo much in my mind. No, added ſhe, it is your aunt, the Princeſs B. C. ſiſter to the deceaſed Duke that paſſes for your father. What can this importunate woman want with me? ſaid I, and why does ſhe come to trouble me this morning? I do not know, replied Madam Cafardo; and was going to proceed farther, but the Princeſs came in the while, and ſhe was obliged to retire. This was the ſecond viſit I received from my aunt ſince ſhe knew that I was daughter to her brother; and to give my readers a proper idea of this extraordinary perſonage, it is neceſſary that I ſhould lay before them a ſhort ſketch of her character and perſon: Be pleaſed then to obſerve, that the Princeſs B. C. was a woman ſmall in ſta-

ture,

ture, who when upright was no higher than my waiſt, and might be called a dwarf; ſhe had not a limb in her body, nor a feature in her face, that was not deformed and diſtorted, her noſe particularly reached almoſt to her chin; the weakneſs of her brain might be ſeen in her eyes, and though ſhe had an itching to be always ſpeaking, her words ſeldom had any foundation: in all her actions ſhe aſſumed an air of importance, and few were the things of any conſequence in the world that ſhe did not pretend to have a perfect knowledge of: ſhe dreſſed like her equals in the richeſt cloaths, but in a faſhion peculiar to herſelf; ſhe generally was dreſſed in a hoop of a moſt enormous ſize, and the lapets of her cap when ſhe curtſied touched the ground; her gown was magnificent, and adorned with jewels ſuitable to her ſituation in life, though at the ſame time her ſhift and lace ruffles were as dirty as if they had been dipt in the mire. Notwithſtanding her figure was not new to me, yet I found it a difficult matter to refrain from laughing; whoever was in her company had not much trouble to anſwer her, for as ſoon as ſhe had ended one nonſenſe ſhe

began another ; and from her firſt entrance into my room till ſhe went out, never did ſhe ſtop ſpeaking. My dear niece, ſaid ſhe to me, ſince the world will have it that you are daughter to my brother, I am come to do the duty of a mother : mind, I don't joke; if you don't know who I am, inform yourſelf, and they will tell you, there is none like me for giving good council : ſit down, my dear, for I want to talk to you at my own eaſe . . . curſe thoſe chairs, how uneaſy they are for a perſon with an hoop ; and if you believe me, a woman of quality without her hoop cuts an ugly figure : — O! but what a ſtupid aſs is your Count Termes, to refuſe the King's offer; and my ſiſter-in-law is another, for not letting you have the Count: and what does he pretend to live at your expences ? make a deſtruction of my ſon to make you a fortune ? does the Ducheſs pretend to give you a monarch ? ſhe ought to think otherwiſe, Miſs ; we have been alſo in our time ſomething handſome, but we had not this madneſs in our brain ; it is very true, that in the world now a-days, fortune is more requiſite than merit, and your pretty face to be ſure entitles you to a fortune, notwith-

nòtwithſtanding the mean ſtation of your mother: I do not intend in this to offend you; to have for your father the Duke my brother, ſufficiently juſtifies in you his weakneſs, and you may aim with all reaſon to marry ſome other honourable party: Count Termes is obliged to marry you, at leaſt the world ſays ſo, and I will have it ſo if it coſts me all my eſtate: be conſtant in your reſolutions, for you are my neice; depend upon me more than upon any one elſe, and you ſhall ſee what my protection will do; let what will happen, Count Termes muſt be your huſband; remember, I will have it ſo: a kiſs, my dear neice; I have got a hundred viſits to make before dinner: we will talk another time; adieu.

After this nonſenſical ſpeech, rehearſed to me all in one breath, the Princeſs parted, and I was highly pleaſed that ſhe gave me no occaſion to anſwer her. Since the very firſt moment I knew her, I had conſidered her to be a very ſilly woman, without the leaſt grain of prudence. We ſhould ſometimes act more cautiouſly with fools than with people of ſenſe. To hear myſelf in that manner treated as a baſtard, was an offence for which I ne-

ver after bluſhed, becauſe I was never after upbraided to my face with ſuch a fault in my birth : however, in her I forgave it, ſeeing her intereſted in my love, even to want me contented. Her little authority gave me no great reaſon to hope, but her prattlings and extravagancies might nevertheleſs be the cauſe of ſome new diſorder. I found from her diſcourſe all thoſe things to be true which my mother had told me, and could not conceive how they could propagate ſuch ſtories about me, nor who was the author of them, but found myſelf more than ever under the neceſſity to avoid the conſequences of it.

This viſit of my aunt's alſo helped to confirm me in the reſolution I had already taken, to retire into a Cloyſter, and to communicate it to my parents. I only waited to make firſt that great ſtep with Count Termes, which was for ever to ſeparate me from him.

While I waited every moment for his arrival, a letter was brought to me, wrote in a character not remembered by me, which ſurprized me not a little. Opening it with impatience to ſee the contents, I found it to be from Mr. N. N. my courteous friend in Venice,

nice, who gave me notice thereby that he was arrived at Paris, to see that famous city, and as soon as possible would be with me at Versailles. My transformation being yet a secret to him, and he believing me to be a man, had directed the letter to Count Richard. This news was no small satisfaction to me, Mr. N. N. being just arrived at a time when I was so uneasy in my mind, I knew him to be capable, according to his prudence and generosity, to assist me at least with his counsel. To my friends spread in various cities of Europe, I never gave the least notice of my being publickly known for a woman, unless they knew of it by some other means, they therefore believed me still to be a man, and the surprize it occasioned in them when they came to see me again, gave me a particular pleasure.

I had just perused the contents of this letter, when news was brought me of Count Terme's arrival. Madam Cafardo was gone out with my mother, and the intelligence was brought me by Mr. Befone, who could not but see the unquietness of my mind. Let him come in, said I, but with a weak and trembling voice, scarcely to be heard. While he was gone to introduce him, I

ſeated myſelf upon a chair, with my right elbow reſting upon a table, being ſuddenly deprived of my ſtrength in ſuch a manner that I could not ſtand on my feet, and ſeized with a giddineſs in my head, as if the room was going round with me. To ſuppreſs the cold horror which at this time ſeized me from head to foot, not even that undauntedneſs ſhewed by me on former occaſions would have been enough. Together with the apparel of a woman, it ſeemed that I had dreſſed myſelf with all the weakneſs of our ſex, not being able in this caſe to be miſtreſs of myſelf.

CHAP. XVII.

My Meeting with Count Termes, Mr. N. N. and M. D'Arcore.

IN this ſtate and poſture Count Termes found me. At his firſt ſtep into my room, my paleneſs and my agitation aſtoniſhed him in ſuch a manner that he ſtood immoveable for ſome moments. Civility obliged me to riſe and meet him; I tried to get up, but it was in vain; being deſtitute of ſtrength, and oppreſſed with grief, I fell

fell on my chair again, and from this ſhould have fallen to the ground, had not the Count ran to ſupport me. What does this mean, Miſs, ſaid he, reſpectfully kiſſing my hand, by which he ſupported me? What is the meaning that I find you in this condition? What, has the Ducheſs called me here to vent on me all her cruelty, by obliging me to ſee you die before my eyes? No, Sir, anſwered I, my mother is not cruel to you; but fate is cruel to us both; ſhe was intreated by me to permit me the pleaſure of ſeeing you, and I have deſired this pleaſure to aſk you one favour; from your love and from your generoſity I know I can be promiſed all. Ah! dear Count, it would have been better for you, and might for me alſo, that you had loved me leſs, and had been leſs generous for my ſake. By refuſing in the offers of the king, your fortune, you have made me ſenſible how much more you are my care than all the reſt of the world; this is an exceſs of love, to which, in juſtiçe, I owe all my gratitude; nor ſhould I be grateful enough, if I did not regard your fortune as much as I do your perſon itſelf; nor will I ever be content unleſs I ſee you

again

again happy. Your felicity is in your own hands; and you may attain it by consenting only to one favour which I am going to ask of you. Here the Count interrupted me, saying, To you, my Princess, it belongs not to intreat me, but to command me; and by using a language unbecoming your character, you offend against my will. No, Sir, added I, notwithstanding the authority you grant me over your heart, what I desire from you carries with it the title of a favour, in begging from you another proof of your love, which will render me, more than all the rest glorious and contented. Alas! grant to me, dear Count, this last proof of your love, and don't hesitate a moment whatever constraint it may cost you. I beg it for that love you always professed for me; for those troubles I have exposed myself to for your sake, and for as much as my reputation, tranquillity and life, can be dear to you; if, to excite your pity, 'tis necessary to implore it at your feet, I here kneel before you, since there is no one present that can see or hear me, to represent this submission as a crime. I then got up to kneel before him, but he prevented me, and falling upon his knees,

knees, with a torrent of tears, What language, said he, Miss D'Arville, is this you hold with me this day? and what am I to dread from this unexpected prognostication of some terrible misfortune? Speak, Miss, What can I do for you? having nothing more of my own than my miserable life, nor is even that my own, for I have consecrated it all to your service; is there any thing more remains for me to do, but to sacrifice it to your glory, that so as I have lived, I may also die for you? Speak, in the name of heaven, and leave crying; speak at once, What is it? My request, replied I, with all the resolution and spirits I was mistress of, is, that you would cease to love me, and turn your affections towards the Lady Marchioness M. to take her for your spouse, to establish your fortune by taking her for your wife, and not to envy my glory in having myself contributed to make you happy. To your noble soul, I am sensible, that to act in this manner must be a great mortification, but I know not which of us will be the greatest sufferer in consequence of such a proceeding, as the thinking of it only almost deprives me of life. If you were really so much affected,

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replied the Count, rising from the ground, you ought not to propose to me a step so contrary to the dictates of my heart, which not only endangers my present existence, but wounds my honour in the most tender part: that I should cease to love you; that I should marry the Lady Marchioness; and you to tell it to me! and you to think of it, without reflecting, that with reason I should call you cruel and ungrateful. Ah! ungrateful and cruel woman, now you repent of what you have done for me, and are striving to convince me that you are vexed for what I have done for your sake. It is not my fortune that you mind, but perhaps your own greatness, and I will ever steadfastly believe that you grant me your permission to espouse the Marchioness, that yourself might be at liberty to espouse her brother; and because you love him, you counsel me to espouse his sister, and would make me guilty of an infidelity so detestable, the better to justify in some manner your own crime. No, ungrateful woman, this shall never be; I see that of our nuptials there remains no hopes, and perhaps I have no longer any place in your heart; however I shall not follow

the

the example of your ingratitude; nor will I ever be anothers, but yours eternally, and yours I will be to your continual ſhame; my fidelity I am certain will ſerve you for a chaſtiſement, and my unhappineſs will be leſs burthenſome to me when I ſee you unable to live content.

With theſe words he attempted to turn his back and depart; but I ſtoped him, ſaying, have you then the heart to leave me ſo? and to give me, in return for the moſt virtuous tenderneſs, theſe bitter reproaches? I am the cruel and the ungrateful, but am willing to ſacrifice mine to your fortune; and while I deſire you to eſpouſe another to make you happy, I am contented, in proof of my conſtancy, to remain unmarried, and to bury myſelf for ever in a cloyſter; ſo I have reſolved, and without doubt it will be ſo; there is no other method to preſerve, together with my honour, my tenderneſs for you: this is a ſevere ſtroke which I never expected; and the more this ſacrifice pains me, the greater is my inclination to ſuffer it, being in neceſſity to do it for you.

During my diſcourſe, Count Termes changed from an immoderate rage into

into an amorous tenderneſs, and, the tears flowing from our eyes, we remained a conſiderable time looking at each other without ſpeaking a word; I at length took courage to break the painful ſilence, and related to him the reaſon of this my reſolution; I alſo told him, that the Marquis B. C. was the principal author of this ſcandal: at hearing this his fury gained the better of his reaſon, and would have plunged him into ſome deſperate ſtep, if I had not appeaſed him with my tears; he ſwore to me that he would not ſhew the leaſt reſentment in his preſent circumſtances, and bound himſelf firmly to obſerve his oath; but as to his marrying the Lady Marchioneſs he knew not how to reſolve, and he had no ſooner promiſed me to comply but he repented of it again. In this perplexity of thoughts and affections Mr. Befone found us, who came in to acquaint me, that there was a ſtranger who deſired to ſee the Count Richard; I could not tell who this could be, and thought, whoever it was, their viſit would be importunate to me at that time, yet I ſaid he might come in, and as ſoon as he appeared I knew him to be my friend at Venice, but he did not know me:

Madam,

Madam, ſaid he to me, I hope I have not been underſtood wrong, the honour I aſked for was to ſee the Count Richard, and not his ſiſter, as I ſuppoſe you to be by the great reſemblance you bear to him. Sir, anſwered I, you may ſuppoſe that the Count is the Counteſs Richard, and you now ſee both in the perſon of Miſs Arville, daughter to the deceaſed Duke of * * * *: this news ſurpriſed him, and I was conſtrained to acquaint him with the particulars; notwithſtanding this, he anſwered me, with an air of gentility, This your transformation, Miſs, how glorious it is you! but to me it is really a grief, for I came with the greateſt deſire to embrace you; but finding you thus transformed, my deſire increaſed to exceſs, and I muſt content myſelf with only reſpectfully kiſſing your hand: conſider what a mortification this muſt be to a Venetian heart, naturally amorous and tender. His vivacity would have diverted me extreamly, if my ſituation had not been ſo wretched; we talked ſome time about indifferent affairs; but to conclude with Count Termes concerned me more than any thing beſides: the preſence of Mr. N. N. was no ways

disagreeable to me, because I knew him to be a man of prudence and experience, and capable to assist us in our circumstances by his wholesome advice: I therefore gave him a short relation of the affair, and re-assumed the discourse about my proposal with the Count; but we were again interrupted by another visitor whom neither of us in the least expected; this was our particular friend Mr. D'Arcore, who presented himself to me, smiling, and saying, Can you deny, Miss, that under those cloaths there is not at present Count Richard? for though you concealed it from me before, well I knew that under those of Count Richard was concealed Miss D'Arville: my candour with you merited the recompence of more sincerity at your hands; but in regard to the Count, my friend, I forgive you all, provided you will continue to grant me the honour of being your servant.

In return for these obliging expressions, I was constrained to repeat several things already mentioned, and I admired the honour of Mr. D'Arcore, who never gave me the least reason to suspect that he was privy to my secret. Thus I found, to my great consolation, assembled together in my room, the best

beſt friends I had in the world, and who each of them earneſtly joined in wiſhing me happy: I again related to them my melancholy ſituation, and begged them from their friendſhip to aſſiſt me with their advice. But my circumſtances appeared to every one very critical, and no one would counſel me to the retirement of a cloyſter, though they confeſſed there could not be a more virtuous expedient; they alſo proffered, not only to me but to Count Termes alſo, the uſe of their houſes at Lyons and Venice, with all they were worth in the world: concerning the Count's nuptials with the Lady Marchioneſs, they approved of my conduct, but believed it unneceſſary; they ſaid that it was his duty to agree to thoſe terms, and it was my duty to my mother to deſire it of him. Thus by the plurality of votes I obtained my requeſt, and Count Termes gave me his word, though with extream grief, that on receiving my orders he would be diſpoſed to obey me. On this our meeting, which had laſted above three hours, broke up; and I remained, I will not ſay more content, but in leſs anguiſh of mind: for in the greateſt, misfortunes I am convinced it is always a conſolation to have done our duty.

CHAP. XVIII.

Myſterious Meaning of my Mother; and ſome Hints given me by Janeſon of the Perſons who had defamed my Character.

THE Ducheſs, my mother, returned towards night, and tho' fatigued with her journey, ſhe could not go to bed without knowing from me the event of that day; when I told her that I had obeyed her orders, and that the Count would eſpouſe the Lady Marchioneſs at my firſt notice, I ſaw by her countenance that ſhe was greatly pleaſed, nor did ſhe omit to beſtow the higheſt encomiums on my virtue: She told me, that by an action ſo magnanimous, I had proved myſelf to be her child; that I ſhould triumph over my malicious enemies, and that ſooner or later I ſhould be revenged of them all; but I obſerved that her joy was conſiderably abated, when I added, that ſince Count Termes had done ſo much for my ſake, I alſo in honour was obliged to lay a reſtraint upon myſelf, in return to his compliance with my

my requeſt, by retiring, for the remainder of my life, into a monaſtery. She did not ſeem either ſatisfied or diſpleaſed at my words; but ſhe was too old at court not to know how to diſſemble her ſentiments with dexterity, and ſhe attended to my diſcourſe without anſwering one word, or giving the leaſt ſign of ſurprize. I continued to lay before her all the reaſons which authoriſed my reſolution, and added, that ſuch a ſtep would alone vindicate my innocence to the cenſorious world.

When I had ſaid every thing that I thought proper in defence of my conduct in ſuch a proceeding, ſhe anſwered me ſeriouſly, that my reſolution was much to be commended, but that it was not the only one to be embraced in my circumſtances, and ſhe adviſed me, before I executed it, to think a little better about it; that ſhe would not promiſe to conſent to, nor declare entirely againſt it, becauſe it did not depend upon her only, but on the Prince, my father, and perhaps on the event of her being with child. At theſe words ſhe left me; but this was enough to confirm in me the juſt foundation of Madam Cafardo's opinion, that my parents would be leſs rigorous concerning my marriage, if

the Ducheſs ſhould chance to have a lawful heir to the eſtate.

Notwithſtanding theſe flattering proſpects, I could not paſs my days in tranquillity, nor enjoy one peaceable night; the ſole thought of loſing Count Termes, and of ſeeing him in the arms of another, rendered them painful and ſevere. To ſweeten, in ſome meaſure, the bitterneſs, I thought it neceſſary to haſten my retirement into my charming ſolitude, and to chuſe it in ſome place diſtant from France, that I might be afar off from theſe objects which principally contributed to diſturb my quiet; and of all the cities of Europe I could not find a place better adapted for my purpoſe than the city of Venice; there I was ſure to have a good friend, who would be to me more like a father, than an acquaintance. There none knew of my misfortunes, nor ſhould I hear the mortifying news of what happened in France to Count Termes, to my prejudice and unſpeakable torment.

My ſpirits being filled with theſe ſweet ideas, I figured to myſelf a happy ſtate of life for the future, but was ſoon called back from theſe pleaſing reflections, like one rouzed from a dream; the

the horror of my imminent misfortune, and the thought of dividing myself for ever from a man so dear to me, and for his virtue so worthy of my love, required a resolution superior to mine, and even threatened me with the loss of my life. After struggling so long with these tumultuous disorders of my mind, how could I do otherwise than to entertain an utter abhorrence against those who were the cause of it; but whom could I accuse, when I myself was the principal cause of my trouble? If I had not gone roving about the world a stranger, and in a strange dress, I should not have given reason to the malicious to attack my honour; but what had I done to be dishonoured in this manner? and who were the villains that put so bad a construction on my most virtuous intentions, and defamed me without even knowing of me? This was to me a mystery that disturbed me not a little, and occupied every day a good part of my reflections. The Marquis B. C. was a wretch, whose black soul was destitute of every principle of honour; all that happened to me on his account, when the Duke was living, was enough to make me know him for a vile wretch; but in this attempt to scandalize me

over

over all France, I could not believe him to be without accomplices; for, as to himself, he was too well known by the generality of people, to gain credit for any thing he asserted; I likewise knew that the Marquis B. C. had not the art to contrive a plot, which was executed so cunningly as to answer the proposed end, and injure both my reputation and my love, unless it was suggested to him by some other person who was an enemy to me, and gloried in this method of seeking revenge. In searching out the original cause of such private injuries, I seldom found myself in the wrong; and even on this occasion I was not far from judging rightly. My father one day sent me notice, that there was with him an acquaintance of mine, who desired to see me, and that in a little time he would send him to my apartment. I had not much leisure to reflect who this could be, for almost in that moment appeared Janeson, my old learned acquaintance in the Bastile, and to whom I was in many respects obligated. My father had informed him who I was before he left his apartment, and he came kneeling at every step, and gave me the title of highness at every third word. Soon after my interview with Count

Count Termes in the Baſtile, Janeſon was ſet at liberty by the means of the the Prince, my father; and he told me that with this lucky accident, there came another ſtill better: I aſked him what it was, and he told me with a ſmile, that his wife died a few days before he came out. Of this he would have talked ſome hours, but I being deſirous of diſcourſing about other matters, had the curioſity to aſk him what important affair had ſeperated him from his books, and dragged him to Verſailles; he replied that he came to implore the protection of the Prince, that he might have juſtice done him.

Your highneſs ſaid he to me, in a high ſtile, mixing with it ſome Greek and Latin proverbs, of which I knew not the meaning, your highneſs already knows that I am obliged to follow the profeſſion of a writer; that is to ſay, I am born to work all my life, and die miſerable. If you remember that comedy, of which I ſhewed you ſome ſcenes in the Baſtile, and which merited your approbation, your highneſs will pleaſe to know, that that very comedy was to make my fortune, but it is now upon the point of being my ruin. I ſhewed it to ſome of the actors belonging

longing to the company of the King's comedians, and they approved of it so well that they resolved to represent it. They asked me what value I put upon it; to make an agreement was no difficult matter, because, like the rest of my profession, I wanted the pence. The comedy received a general applause, and this gave me courage to venture further; for that company I have worked four months, day and night, in which time I have produced eight comedies, by which they have gained an immense sum of money; but because the last was not received with such applause as the others, they refuse to pay me what they owe me, as if the labour of a man's brains was to be bought by trial, like the blade of a sword, or the barrel of a musket. For this reason, Miss, I came to implore the protection of the Prince, your father, that I might have justice done to me. I have to do with three persons, whom, for their most extraordinary villanies, I may call the race of Lucifer, and to verify the old proverb, that *the Devil helps his own*, they also do not want for protection, for they have applied to the Marquis of B. C. who has the direction of the theatres, and he must have promised them

them his assistance, for they now refuse to pay me with more impudence than ever. Amongst them there is the unworthy wretch called Tartar, who has been banished twice from France, and again restored to the thratre, on account of his skill in buffoonery : united with him, there are two other villains, one of whom is called Albevit, and the other Nimar, both strangers in the profession, having embraced it because they did not know how to live otherwise. Janeson would have proceeded further, but at the name of Tartar, and Albevit, I interrupted him, because I reputed myself likewise embroiled with them. Tartar, after what had happened in Italy, had more reason to hate me than he had the first time at Versailles, Albevit was the villain from whose arms I took the woman belonging to my friend at Venice, and perhaps for so doing he did not forgive me ever after ; their dependance on the Marquis B. C. made me immediately suppose them to be the authors of the scandalous falsities which were spread in Paris and at Versailles, about me. I enquired of Janeson whether he had heard any others of that company mention my name ; he answered that

that he had heard me ſpoken of by an actreſs, but could not tell me any thing more particular. I aſked him through mere curioſity, the name of that actreſs, and found it to be Miſs Gianetton, my antient confidant, not long returned from Italy, and who had engaged with that company to ſing between the acts, according to the cuſtom of France. This gave me reaſon to believe that I ſhould eaſily find out the remainder. I deſired Janeſon to ſalute her in my name, and to tell her that I deſired to ſee her at Verſailles; I aſſured him alſo that I would ſpeak in his favour to my father, to have juſtice done him; but before he would leave me I was conſtrained to hear him for a good half hour exclaim againſt the unhappineſs of the poetic profeſſion. Whether his complaints were reaſonable or not, I dare not take upon me to affirm, but, according to my maxim, whoever connects himſelf with people of a bad character, has no right to complain of ill uſage, or at leaſt deſerves but little compaſſion, and from company of that ſort they are wiſeſt that keep themſelves moſt at a diſtance.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

A more full Discovery of my Persecutors, which fixes in me the resolution of retiring into a Cloyster.

MIss Gianetton had no sooner received my invitation by the hands of my friend Janeson, than she prepared to pay me a visit, and in the space of two days arrived at Versailles. Her regard for me was so great, that, without paying the least respect to the different circumstances of my past, and present situation in life, either in the character of Count Richard, or that of Miss D'Arville, she clung about my neck, and embraced me over and over again with all the tenderness of a sincere friend: to find jewels incorporated with base and common metal, is an accident which but seldom occurs; nevertheless when it so happens, the baseness of the metal ought not to depreciate the value of those jewels, and I am sorry to say, that a sincere heart is so rarely to be found, even in those of high rank, that when we find it in a plebeian, we should be unjust if we omitted to bestow on it the due praise; and commendations bestowed on merit, wherever found, can in no shape be

contrary to the rules of the ſtricteſt virtue. When Miſs Gianetton had thus affectionately expreſſed her ſatisfaction at ſeeing me, and given me a long detail of her own adventures, we fell into diſcourſe about the company of comedians with whom ſhe was engaged, and I found from ſome hints which ſhe dropt, that Tartar, Albevit, and Nimar, made it their ſtudy to ſlur my reputation, and to propagate the moſt malicious and envious falſehoods concerning me, the very thoughts of which, even at this moment, make me ſhudder with horror. You will not be amazed, Miſs, added ſhe, that theſe three wretches ſpeak ſo much againſt your character, when I inform you, that they do the ſame by all perſons of credit. Of Albevit and Tartar I find you already entertain a proper opinion, and if theſe two are perjured and wicked by nature, the third, which is Nimar, is worſe than either of them; their greateſt pleaſure is to caſt an odium upon the faireſt reputations, to bring them, by that means, more upon a par with their own; they rack their inventions for the moſt infamous ſcandal, nor do they bluſh when convicted of the moſt notorious falſities: they will

will one day make a devil of a ſaint, and the next day a ſaint of a devil: I do not wonder, Miſs, that theſe wretches are unable to ſhake off the filthineſs of that mire from which they aroſe, as it would be unnatural to expect a good ſmell from the filth of a dunghill; but I am ſurpriſed to ſee gentlemen of rank and fortune, ſuch as the Marquis B. C. countenance them in their villainies, to the great diſhonour of his reputation; welcome to his table, and ſafe under his protection, they ſport with the characters of the innocent, and ſpread their baneful poiſon of the blackeſt ſcandal with impunity: to inſtance the truth of this, I need only take notice of the ſhameful uſage which poor Janeſon has received at their hands; nor does he dare to complain, leſt he ſhould incur the reſentment of the Marquis B. C.

By his indefatigable induſtry in writing for them, has he ſupported their reputation and intereſt for ſome time paſt, and his bad ſucceſs with his laſt comedy was entirely owing to their incapacity to repreſent it in a proper manner; they however alledge it to be the fault of the writer, and keep from him that property which he has all the reaſon in the

world to demand; Miſs Gianneton ſpoke ſo much to the purpoſe, that I was fully convinced it muſt have been theſe wretches who had thus cruelly endeavoured to wound my reputation, but I was amazed to think how they got credit in the world, neither could I tell how to baffle their dark ſchemes againſt me; I imagined that it was well known to my parents, and if they did not think proper to reſent it, it might be owing to their prudence, therefore in me it would be highly unbecoming to make any ſtir about it, and accordingly reſolved to wait the event of time, and rely upon that all-wiſe Being who is the powerful and certain protector of injured virtue. In order to make ſome return for the favours which I had received from Miſs Gianneton, I adviſed her to eſpouſe Janeſon, and told her that I would uſe my beſt endeavours to procure them a comfortable maintainance, without their aſſociating any longer with ſuch a company of vile wretches: my propoſal ſhe did not diſlike, and though, it is true, I had nothing of my own to beſtow upon her, I made no doubt but that Mr. D'Arcore, and my good friend at Venice, would take a pleaſure, from their own incomes,

incomes, to enable me to keep my word on an occaſion ſo commendable, and what effect theſe my intentions had will be ſeen hereafter; for my part, whatever I ſaw and heard ſerved only to increaſe my inclination for a ſolitary life; In what a world do we live! ſaid I to myſelf, and what pleaſure can we take in our converſation with mankind, when daily experience convinces us that we ought to look upon the generality of them as our moſt bitter enemies! our honour, our fortune, and even our life, hangs ſuſpended in the air by a thread, when it is in the power of every malicious detractor to wound our reputation: what avails it to be virtuous, when by vice this day virtue is overcome? or what profit is it to be innocent, when lyes gain a preference to truth, and ſlander is ſtamped upon the faireſt characters? Bleſſed is that ſolitude to which envy is a ſtranger, and how deſirable are the walls of a convent, which, though they confine us, defend us from calumny and reproach! With theſe reflections I continued to encourage myſelf for that great ſtep which I believed not to be afar off, and which I thought ſo neceſſary for me; yet, when I reflected

on my love for Count Termes, I thought it almoſt impoſſible. In the mean while his nuptials with the Lady Marchioneſs were held for certain, and he had the liberty to ſee me whenever he pleaſed, ſo much did my parents truſt to his honour and to my word; but to ſee him too often was to me more torment than pleaſure, becauſe the ſight of him rekindled my love, and made me lament the neceſſity I was in to loſe him. Before the day drew nigh of his nuptials with my rival, I wiſhed to be out of his ſight in my propoſed retirement, but if I intreated my mother to permit me, ſhe, for her part, begged of me not to take ſo precipitate a reſolution, on which depended her quiet, my quiet, and all the being of our family. In this melancholy ſituation nothing remained for me but affliction, tears, and deſpair; and all my conſolation depended on my adherence to the ſtricteſt virtue. The Marquis M. came often to ſee me; his viſits were within the limits of common civility, nor for a long while did he ſpeak a word in regard to the propoſition made me of his marriage; his genteel and decent behaviour rendered him in a manner amiable, that I more than once repent-

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ed my being prejudiced so much in favour of another, and that it was not in my power to repay those tokens he gave me of sincere affection. One day, when we were talking about his sister, he extolled to the highest degree the obligations she was under to me, for having persuaded Count Termes to take her for his wife; We, Miss, said he, do violence to your inclinations for Count Termes; the fault is not really ours, but is written incontroulably in the book of fate: Count Termes is my particular friend; my sister undoubtedly loves him, having known him at Milan, and received from him so many instances of his regard; but nevertheless she herself would have courage to do as much for you as you have done for her, if your parents and our dependence on them did not oblige us to act otherwise: though my sister has been so ready to accept of your lover, she has been for some time past inconsolable, because she must usurp him from you; when we contracted the bond of those nuptials with the Duchess, and with the Prince, neither she nor I knew that you were existing, or that there was any one so nearly related to their family; we also are in circumstances

ſtances in which we muſt act by the direction of others; I do not know how my ſiſter will act in regard to Count Termes, in caſe ſhe ſhould marry the Count, but I'm certain that ſhe'll always act as your real friend, and as a lady of honour: if I ſhould ever have the honour of being your ſpouſe, I will leave you to your own choice; coming to my lot, you ſhall have my permiſſion to keep company with a perſon ſo dear to you as Count Termes, without my entertaining the leaſt ſhadow of jealouſy or miſtruſt of your virtue: if you loſe a huſband, you purchaſe a brother-in-law; and if you were not a Princeſs in Paris, you might perhaps be one in Italy: but theſe are empty flatteries that do not in the leaſt operate with the nobleneſs of your ſentiments, and I dare not offer violence to the liberty of your heart: I alſo know, Miſs, what virtue is, nor is it enough for me to admire it in you, if I do not endeavour to imitate it: diſpoſe yourſelf to your own pleaſure, for I never will conſent to take you for my ſpouſe, unleſs your own conſent gives a ſanction to it: this is the only recompence that I can make for your generoſity ſhewn in favour of my ſiſter. Theſe expreſſions of the

Marquis

Marquis M. laid me under ſuch great obligations, that as much as I endeavoured to anſwer him with equal gentility, I knew not how to give him in return an anſwer any ways adequate to the politeneſs of his expreſſions.

CHAP. XX.

Some extraordinary Circumſtances, which perſuade my Father that I deſigned to run away with Count Termes.

VArious were my reflections after receiving this viſit from the Marquis; I admired his honeſt proceedings, not only in regard to me, but alſo with reſpect to Count Termes, and it afforded me ſome ſatisfaction to find that every glimpſe of virtue and reaſon was not yet baniſhed from among the great. Almoſt every other woman would have hated his ſiſter as her rival, but I thought her adorable, and moſt worthy of the ſurrender which I was going to make to her of a perſon as dear to me as life itſelf.

When even ſhe as well as myſelf had paſſionately loved Count Termes, how could I make a crime of that love in her which I made an honour in myſelf:

ſelf? We women are generally unreaſonable in our affections, as well as in our averſions; a man that to me appeared amiable, why ſhould he not ſeem ſo to another, without her profeſſing herſelf my enemy? to love, or not to love, is not in our breaſts, becauſe the paſſions of our ſoul are not at our own diſpoſal, though they ought to depend upon reaſon to render them blameleſs; I ſhould have had reaſon to hate Lady M. if ſhe had attempted by artifice to take my lover from me; but when ſhe accepted him from my hands as a voluntary reſignation, of whom could I complain? nor was it more than what I would have done myſelf: it is true, I confeſs, that I envied her condition, becauſe to be wife to Count Termes I reputed her happy; and conſidering this to be a felicity which I at firſt had deſigned for myſelf, her memory and her preſence could not but torment me, though I ſtill continued to love her; this was my opinion, nor could I think otherwiſe, even when that fatal day arrived on which the Lady M. was to marry Count Termes, and baniſh with his nuptials all my hopes of happineſs. When my mother acquainted

me

me that the following day was deſtined for the nuptials of Count Termes with Lady M. and perſuaded me to diſpoſe myſelf for attending that great ſolemnity, what did I not do, what did I not ſay, that ſhe might permit me to leave Verſailles for ſome days, not to be preſent at a marriage which pierced my very ſoul; but all was in vain, becauſe my abſence would have been a ſign of my weakneſs, and would prejudice my reputation by giving thoſe villains more room to ſpeak againſt me; I will not ſay that ſhe was unreaſonable in her requeſt, but ſhe deſired that I might aſſiſt in perſon at that ceremony, and appear with the reſt of the nobility at the entertainment that was to be made on that occaſion, and ſhe added moreover that it was abſolutely neceſſary. Either the Ducheſs my mother was a woman ſuperior to the weakneſs of her ſex, or elſe ſhe muſt have ſuppoſed me capable of a reſolution which even ſhe herſelf was not miſtreſs of. 'Tis impoſſible to paint the agonies of my mind at that time: my virtue had almoſt abandoned me in thoſe difficult circumſtances; I ran more than once to my wardrobe in which hung the mens cloaths I formerly wore, with intent to

dreſs

dreſs myſelf anew, and with the favour of that ſame night make another flight, I know not what ſerious reflections kept me from that perilous attempt, becauſe my tumultuous paſſions were at that time blind to the light of reaſon; I ſtopped however a little to peruſe a billet which I received about twelve o'cloek from Count Termes, and which was wrote in this tenor:

" Miſs,

I am unable to come in perſon to acquaint you with what I ought to inform you of, to convince you of my ſincere affection for you: ſome hours yet remain which are ſufficient to make us leſs unhappy: diſpoſe yourſelf as you think beſt, for in your hands is my will, and yours only is wanting, to abandon ſudddenly, in the approaching night, my intended ſpouſe, the court, and all France: wherever I go, at leaſt I ſhall be all yours; and before you reſolve, remember that without you I cannot live."

This billet was enough to encreaſe my torment, and drive me into a new abyſs of confuſion; oppoſing to each other the nuptials of Count Termes with

with Lady M. and his propoſal of a flight from France, I knew not which of the two to chuſe, becauſe I thought them equally deſperate; to condemn him to live with a woman he did not love, I thought cruel; but on the other hand, to agree to a flight which muſt render me diſobedient to my parents, and blameable in the eyes of the world, I thought would be a plain proof of my weakneſs; I did not know which way to reply, yet I muſt anſwer him that my irreſolution might not encreaſe his torment. The ſimilitude of our ideas to each other was ſomething extraordinary, and that we ſhould both, almoſt in the ſame moment, meditate on an eſcape; but could I expect that he would acquaint me with his to haſten mine, and aſk of me that advice which I myſelf ſtood in need of? no; I did not believe the Count capable to act ſo injudiciouſly, as to ſacrifice his honour and mine to a blind paſſion; that time was paſſed in which my ſtation in life would have permitted me to have recourſe to ſuch remedies, the very thought of it ſtruck me with horror, and whatever his intention was in writing to me, I reſolved in anſwering of him to diſſemble mine, by adviſing him

to adhere to what he before had promiſed. Thus determined, I ſat down in my wardrobe to write, and had under my eyes thoſe very mens cloaths in which I formerly made my eſcape, having pulled them down a little before in the violent agitation of my mind abovementioned.

The billet of Count Termes lay open on the table at which I was ſitting down to write the anſwer, when in that place, and in the ſame poſture, with the cloaths juſt before my eyes, my father ſuddenly came in; his coming at that time ſurpriſed me, but his preſence did not daunt me; at firſt he aſked me, if I had every thing neceſſary for the nuptials of Lady M. to make an appearance ſuitable to my condition? but ſeeing open on the table the billet of Count Termes, whether he knew it or not I cannot ſay, but he took it in his hand and read it without ſpeaking one word: though it did not contain any thing that might diſhonour me, yet I judged that the ſituation in which he found me might prejudice me in his heart; the billet mentioned a flight, the mens cloaths laying before me expoſed to his ſight, though pulled down without any criminal intention, had greatly

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the appearance of another flight; no ſuſpicion could be more unjuſt than this, but the combination of circumſtances made it ſeem very probable, and my father immediately ſuſpected it; tho'he ſaid nothing to me on that purpoſe, I read in his eyes all the movements of his ſoul, but he diſſembling his inward meaning, I ought to diſſemble the underſtanding of it; it was proper nevertheleſs for me to juſtify myſelf with him from ſuch a black ſuſpicion, and after he had read the billet, when he aſked me how I intended to anſwer it? Stop, Sir, ſaid I, one moment, and you will ſee that I know my duty; I then began to write as follows:

" Sir,

You have promiſed me to eſpouſe the Lady M. and I have given my word to my parents: if you do not care for your honour, at leaſt ſhew ſome regard to mine; then I will believe that you love me. I am devotedly, &c.

The billet being wrote I preſented it open to the Prince, and deſired that he would ſend it to the Count as ſoon as poſſible: he read it and commended me, but ſtill his ſuſpicion was not va-

niſhed, and till the next day he looked upon me with miſtruſt. When I was alone, and had liberty to reflect on what I had wrote to Count Termes, that ſhort anſwer I thought too cruel, and capable to make him commit ſome deſperate action upon himſelf; he would have pardoned my ſeverity had he known that I had wrote it under my father's eyes, nothing leſs would have done to juſtify my innocence from the ſuſpicions that were ſuggeſted to him by my circumſtances, and if this had not happened I ſhould have wrote to him to the ſame effect, but in terms leſs ſevere, and would have ſweetened, with the ſincere teſtimony of my love, the moſt bitter anguiſh of the great ſacrifice to which he was going to deliver himſelf up: I was cruel to him not to be cruel to myſelf; or, I ſhould rather ſay, I was equally cruel to us both, to follow the barbarous laws of this perverſe world, which often make our honour depend upon the moſt evident impoſture: I wanted to remedy thoſe ill conſequences which might attend the firſt, by ſending him a ſecond billet more agreeable; but my father's ſuſpicions might induce him to keep a watchful eye on my proceedings, and

he might poſſibly ſtill have in his hands the other billet, by which means, confronting together the contrarieties of my ſentiments, he would have more reaſon than ever to miſtruſt me: I paſſed all the remainder of that day without reſolving on any thing, and found I had no reaſon to repent of ſo doing, for I took notice that towards night I was obſerved more ſtrictly than uſual, as if they really feared that I deſigned to run away that ſame night.

CHAP. XXI.

The mournfulleſt Night of my whole Life, and ſtrange Events attending it.

THAT evening Madam Cafardo was gone out with the Ducheſs my mother, and I had the pleaſure of being alone in my apartment, to indulge myſelf without any witneſs in the deepeſt melancholy, and paſs that night without other interruption than that of my diſturbed imagination: two hours after ſun-ſet I ordered my waiting-maid to bring me a diſh of chocolate, intending to ſleep without any ſupper, if my ſorrows would permit me to take any reſt, which I did not in the leaſt expect, that evening being to me like the eve

of my death; the ſeaſon was cold, and my fire was lighted in a room that ſtood between the anti-chamber and that in which I ſlept; the entrance to it was the common door of the anti-chamber, but fronting the chimney there was a ſecret door which led, by a long ſtair-caſe, to all the ſmall rooms appointed for the ſervants, and which generally was ſhut, though only with a latch, ſo that it could be opened either within or without; my maid brought me the chocolate as I was ſitting by the fire in the room abovementioned, and I obſerved, while I was drinking of it, that ſhe caſt her eyes on the little door, but I did not take much notice of it: when I had drank the chocolate, I ordered the lights of the anti-chamber to be extinguiſhed, the door to be ſhut, and told her not to trouble me any more that night, as I found myſelf indiſpoſed, and in a ſhort time ſhould retire to my bed. Being then quite alone, I extinguiſhed the lights of the room in which I ſet, becauſe they weakened my ſight; and with no other light than that of the fire, I threw myſelf on a chair with intention not to move from the ſame till the next morning.

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The obſcurity of the place, and the ſilence of the night, correſponded ſo perfectly to the mournful ſadneſs of my fancy, that I flattered myſelf to have found in this gloomy receſs ſome reſpite to my diſturbed imagination. If the obſcurity and ſadneſs reconciled me for ſome moments to doze, the weight which lay on my heart made me ſuddenly ſtart up, trembling with the thoughts of my woes; and I again began to lament. Miſerable me! ſhall I then be condemn'd to weep for ever, and not to ſee one glimpſe of proſperity that would lighten the troubles of my miſerable life! when I knew not who were my parents, I made choice of a lover, agreeable to my inclinations; and I no ſooner gained a knowledge of them, than they oblige me to loſe him for ever! but why do I accuſe them as the authors of my loſs, when it is my own heart, and my obſtinate deſtiny, that deprives me of Count Termes? thus am I toſſed like a ſhip in her courſe, driven by contrary winds, and unable to be ſteered, in the evident danger of loſing either my lover or my honour, becauſe it is not in my power to preſerve them both! and who can aſſure me that I ſhall not loſe them both?

both? when Count Termes has eſpouſed the Lady M. my enemies will inſinuate by this that I never loved him; they will not ſay that I have travelled Europe in mens cloaths, and in his company, and have brought back to France a reputation pure and unſullied; no — they will not ceaſe to cenſure the tranſactions of my life, and their malice will purſue me wherever I go: have I then incurred the diſpleaſure of heaven, and will its wrath for ever render me unhappy? if I have merited its anger, why does it not cruſh me at once with its juſt revenge? alas! I could almoſt arraign heaven as cruel and unjuſt, if to us its providence was not impenetrable, and able, for our ſakes, to produce good even from evil; but what advantage can accrue to me if I loſe you, dear Count Termes? loſe you beyond all hopes of recovery! where are you, my dear Count, that you are deaf to theſe my lamentations, and do not behold my tears!.....

Neither well awake, or aſleep, but internally oppreſſed with inconſolable grief, I was thus bemoaning the ſeverity of my lot, when I was rouſed from my lethargy by a ſudden and unexpected noiſe, as if ſome door was opening,

ing, and turning myſelf about to ſee what it was, I perceived Count Termes, who by the little private door had introduced himſelf into my room and appeared ſuddenly before me; at ſeeing him I was amazed and trembled from head to foot, but ſwiftly riſing up from my chair, I ran furiouſly towards him, almoſt out of my mind: Sir, ſaid I, where are you going at this hour, and in this place? what is your intention? or what do you require of me? — Nothing, Miſs, replied he, do not be angry; no one knows that I am here; your parents are in converſation with my intended ſpouſe, and I have taken this opportunity, with the permiſſion of your maid, who has more compaſſion than yourſelf, to paſs from her room to yours, without any deſign to do you the leaſt injury; is it poſſible, Miſs, that you can hate me to ſuch a degree, as with your own lips to condemn me to a barbarous and cruel death, when you have it in your power to render me the happieſt man upon earth? Sir, anſwered I, in this place my honour is at ſtake, and my character depends on your good behaviour: how would it appear to the eyes of the world, ſhould you be

ſeen to go out of my chamber at this hour? and what would my parents think, if they ſhould ſurpriſe you here? your billet has already made them conceive ſuſpicions injurious to my own and to your honour: alas! for pity, Sir, if you leave me unhappy, do not, by this imprudent ſtep, injure my reputation: retire, I beg of you; a time will come, ere long, to juſtify my proceedings, and convince you that your anger is unjuſt; but for heaven's ſake, at this time ſhew your regard for me by withdrawing yourſelf. Yes, cruel, replied he, I will obey you; but this perhaps will be the laſt homage I ſhall pay you of my profound reſpect, becauſe I cannot long out-live your commands: I will eſpouſe the Lady M. ſince you will have it ſo; but in recompence of this cruel condeſcenſion, grant me, dear Miſs, at leaſt one favour, which I here implore at your feet — to find, dear Miſs, to find ſome excuſe not to be preſent to-morrow at the ceremony of my marriage; your preſence at that time would be a torment to us both; your preſence will endanger both my life and your honour; I have not courage ſufficient, ſeeing you before my eyes, to give my hand to another;

ther. Alas! dear Miſs, proceeded he, with his knees cloſe to my feet, and amorouſly kiſſing my hand — when we heard on a ſudden the anti-chamber door open, and my father preſented himſelf before us. Miſerable me! what could he think, finding us together at that hour, in that dark place, in that poſture, and both of us with the tears in our eyes? I was always tolerably ready at invention in the ſharpeſt encounters, and to have been confuſed at that time would have been the ſame as declaring myſelf guilty; I turned to my father without heſitating a moment, ſaying, Do, Sir, come here, and deliver me from this importunate requeſt of the Count, for I do not know whether it will be agreeable to your pleaſure; he wants me to go at this unſeaſonable hour, and without your conſent, to make a viſit to the Lady M. and to let her know that I am agreeable to their nuptials, and do not envy her condition; not conſidering at the ſame time that I am indiſpoſed, nor do I know if I ſhall be able to-morrow to have the pleaſure of being preſent at the celebration of their nuptials. The favour, replied my father, which the Count deſires of you, is not unreaſonable,

able, and I came here alſo at this time for the ſame purpoſe, becauſe I think your preſence will be neceſſary: but as you find yourſelf indiſpoſed, it would be better for you at preſent to retire to reſt, that you may be more able to-morrow to aſſiſt at the ceremony; and it would have been more to the credit of the Count, if he had ſpared himſelf this trouble: of your honour, Sir, I never doubted, nor do I doubt it now; but the leſs occaſion we give for ſcandal, it will be the better for us all. Your obſervation, Sir, replied the Count, is very juſt, and we undoubtedly ought to be very careful how we furniſh ſlanderous tongues with an opportunity to ſpread their poiſon; but where innocence is accuſed, and unjuſtly loaded with calumnies, the mouths of the malicious ſhould be ſtopt by a proper reſentment: I have deſpiſed them till this time by not minding what they ſaid, becauſe in ſo doing I have continued in your favour; but if I ſhould happen to be deprived of that, I know not to what extremity my paſſion might carry me.

I approve of your courage, added my father, but I deſire that your actions may be regulated by prudence; I truſt

truſt in you, I eſteem you, I love you, and am ſorry that it is not in my power to compleat your happineſs, by giving you Miſs in marriage; but conſider, Sir, that by ſo doing I ſhould have the mortification to ſee both her and you become the ridicule of all France, for already ſome French wit has taken upon him to write Miſs D'Arville's adventures, and has compoſed a romance, intitled, "The Wandering Daughter." From this title you may be certain that the book will do her but little honour; therefore we muſt act with caution, and not give the author the pleaſure of ſeeing this his wicked invention credited as genuine: I have no occaſion to mention his name, becauſe you are both already ſufficiently acquainted with him; but you will be fully revenged in making him appear a lyar. There was more ſaid on this purpoſe, from which Count Termes did not doubt that the author of this romance was the Marquis B. C. my ſuppoſed couſin, and, by the variations of his countenance, I gueſſed that he was bent upon revenge, and I wiſhed for the opportunity of being with him alone, to pacify, by prudent reflections, his juſt reſentment; but he, after continuing ſome

time in a deep ſilence, ſuddenly took his leave and departed; my father alſo retired without ſaying any more to me at that time, and I ſeated myſelf again upon my chair to reflect on what had happened, and on the mortification I was to undergo the next morning.

CHAP. XXII.

Dreadful Accidents which interrupt the Nuptials of Count Termes, and endanger his Liberty.

WHILE I paſt that night in diſmal reflections, Count Termes was expoſed to the moſt terrible danger, of which I was not informed till the next day: when he departed from my room it was about nine o'clock at night, and the moon ſhone ſo bright that he could clearly diſtinguiſh every thing around him: he left us, as I have already obſerved, with the ſting in his heart againſt the Marquis B. C. my ſuppoſed couſin, nor was he got twenty yards from our houſe when, as chance would have it, he met him alone and on foot: they knew each other perfectly well by the brightneſs of the moon: the Count pretended not to ſee the Marquis, and intended if poſſible to avoid ſpeaking to him; but the Marquis

Marquis in an insolent manner thus accosted him with a sneer, Well, Count, said he, what is Miss D'Arville about? what is her opinion of these your ideal nuptials? will you wait for her in the first campaign in Italy to demand proper satisfaction?

At this insult Count Termes could not contain himself any longer; Unworthy wretch, replied the Count in a rage, of you I expect satisfaction for the injury done to one of your equals. He then fell back a couple of steps, and drawing his sword, attacked the Marquis, who was already in a posture of defence: the Count being encouraged by the justice of his cause, made all his thrusts with an irresistable force; the Marquis wounded him in the thigh, and himself a little after received a violent push from the Count, which laid him on the ground expiring, for the sword had passed quite through his body, and he survived but a few moments after. My lover having almost extinguished his anger in the blood of the Marquis, hastened to his lodging, which was not afar off, as fast as his wound would permit; here he put himself to bed, and instead of getting his wound dressed, began coolly to re-

flect upon his ſituation; and knowing that he could not any longer continue with ſafety at Verſailles, and that every proſpect of marrying me was now at an end, thought himſelf acquitted from any obligation of marrying the Lady M. out of a compliment, and he found more conſolation from this laſt thought than trouble from the other two; but as he had no time to loſe in theſe reflections, and every ſhort delay might endanger his ſecurity, he determined to take the advice of a worthy friend, and immediately diſpatched a ſervant to Mr. D'Arcore, who fortunately at that time happened to be at Verſailles; this moſt generous friend hearing of the Count's misfortune, hurried away to his lodging, dreſſed only in his morning-gown and night-cap, being then on the point of going to bed; when he found the Count in that ſituation, with his wound yet undreſſed and running with blood, it added to his concern; and the Count beginning to relate the circumſtances of the affair to him, We have ſomething elſe to think of at this time, ſaid he,; let us firſt get your wound dreſſed and your life in ſecurity, for every thing elſe there is no fear of a remedy; you have in me a real friend,

friend, who will neither ſpare trouble or expences to ſerve you. He immediately ſent for a ſurgeon, who gave his opinion that the wound was not dangerous, and aſſured them that in a fortnight's time it would be perfectly healed. After his wound was dreſſed, and he had related to his friend the occaſion of it, who ſhould appear upon the ſtairs but an officer, attended with a guard of ſoldiers, and who came to arreſt him by order of the court. The conſequences of a duel being extremely dangerous to the party ſurviving, and ſufficient to prove the ruin of not only one perſon, but of a whole family, Mr. D'Arcore gave the officer a meeting at the head of the ſtairs, and aſked him with the greateſt civility, what was his pleaſure, or what buſineſs he came upon? The officer ſeeing Mr. D'Arcore in that dreſs, and concluding from that queſtion that he muſt be Count Termes, of whom he had not the leaſt knowledge, even by ſight, anſwered him with the ſame civility, I am ſorry, Sir, that having now the honour of ſeeing you for the firſt time, I have the diſagreeable taſk to inform you, that I have orders in the King's name to carry you priſoner to the Baſtile.

Mr. D'Arcore finding that this miſtake, in ſuppoſing him to be the Count, would be a favourable circumſtance to his friend, did not let ſlip this promiſing opportunity of ſecuring his liberty, and anſwered the officer, that he would obey the King the more willingly, as he knew himſelf no ways blameable to merit this chaſtiſement. This ſaid, with a familiarity as if he had been in his own houſe, he opened the Count's cloſet, put a ſuit of his cloaths on, which according to his ſtature fitted him exactly, made up a bundle of linen, and aſked, if he might be permitted to take with him one of his ſervants? then pretending to give ſome ſecret orders to his ſervant that was to accompany him, he ſent the Count word of what had happened, to give him time, under favour of the night, to fly to ſome place of ſafety. This ſtratagem had its deſired effect; Mr. D'Arcore was conducted to the guard-houſe, from whence in the morning he was to go to the Baſtile: he had no ſooner left the houſe than the Count had notice, and mounted in a poſt-chaiſe, he was at the gate of Paris by the break of day, and from thence went directly to the houſe of the

Duke

Duke of * * *, his old protector, where he remained without any one knowing to what place he had flown.

In the mean while, to return to myself, the day broke, and I still remained in the chair on which I had seated myself the evening before; I was surprised that morning on hearing Madam Cafardo enter my room sooner than ordinary, but imagined that her business was to dress me, that I might be ready for the ceremony of Lady M's nuptials; but, alas! what tumults arose suddenly within me, when I beheld her pale and confused, almost unable to utter a word. Have you not heard, Miss, said she, that this very night the Marquis B. C. has fought a duel with Count Termes, and was killed on the spot? the Count was wounded in the thigh, and by orders of the court is committed to the Bastile. The unexpected horror of this news, given me all in one breath, and related to me at that time when I was weakened with the agitation and grief of the past night, had such an effect upon my spirits, that I swooned upon the chair, and remained above an hour senseless. I am not one of those women who can faint

faint away at their pleaſure, and I do not know that I have mentioned another circumſtance of that ſort in the whoſe courſe of my adventures; but here truth commands me to mention it, for had I not been uncommonly moved on this alarming occaſion, I muſt certainly have appeared inſenſible in the eyes of all the world. When I returned to myſelf, with the aſſiſtance of Madam Cafardo and the reſt of the family, ſo dubious were the ſentiments of my ſoul that I did not know whether this accident ought moſt to afflict or comfort me; I ſaw the fire of injury and ſlander extinguiſhed by the blood of the greateſt villain amongſt my enemies, who had perſecuted me for ſeveral years paſt; and the nuptials of my lover with the Lady M. my rival, deferred, and perhaps broken off for ever: I conceived alſo, by the death of the Marquis B. C. ſome hopes of my being hereafter more contented: but, on the other hand, how could I rejoice at the death of a man without rendering myſelf in ſome degree culpable? and was there not reaſon for me to fear that his death would be fatal even to Count Termes? could I be ſure of his life when he was wounded? and by his

his arreſtment, could I conceive any hopes of his liberty? Theſe internal ſtruggles of my mind continued all that morning, till towards twelve o'clock, when we firſt heard of the artifice made uſe of by Mr. D'Arcore to ſecure the liberty of his friend, and that Count Termes had fortunately made his eſcape. This news reſtored me from death to life, and I comforted myſelf with the hopes, that Mr. D'Arcore, as ſoon as opportunity offered, would pay me a viſit, and inform me more fully of the particulars.

CHAP. XXIII.

Effects favourable to me produced by the Death of the Marquis B. C.

AFTER the miſerable death of the Marquis B. C. my moſt troubleſome circumſtances began to change face; yet I ſhall mention them little by little as they occurred, becauſe misfortune ruſhes forward like the wind, and proſperity is ſlow in its courſe, like a ſhip againſt wind and tide. The accident of that night made great

great noiſe at Verſailles, but I had the pleaſure of hearing the world declare in favour of Count Termes. Such is the condition of vice, that when chaſtiſement is inflicted on it, either from the juſtice of the world, or from that of heaven, the vicious alſo have the preſumption to aſſume a face of innocence, and no one ſcrupled to ſay, that the Marquis deſerved death long before, and what other end could he expect from his wicked proceedings? every one pretended that they had foretold it more than once, and the very wretches that aſſiſted him in his wicked ſchemes. either through fear of offending him, or to ſatisfy their own wicked inclinations, were the firſt to expoſe his iniquity, and juſtify my innocent conduct. I know not what my parents thought of his death, becauſe they were very cautious in concealing from my eyes every ſentiment of their ſouls, which was not regulated by the maxims of honour.

In talking to me of the fact, they praiſed the courage of Count Termes, but wiſhed that he had acted with a little more prudence. They were pleaſed to ſee, with the blood of the Marquis, the ſtain wiped away from their glory,

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and my honour, but were vexed, that by so doing, he had put the finishing stroke to his own ruin, missing the opportunity of such a noble alliance, and deprived himself of ever seeing me again. This was the point which affected me more than all others, and gave me no small uneasiness; the only satisfaction which I enjoyed was in knowing Count Termes to be secure from the rigour of the law, but did not know in what place he resided, nor did I know in what state his wound was, or whether he was well provided with necessaries for his escape from France; I flattered myself in the midst of these perplexities with the hopes that Mr. D'Arcore should soon be with me to give me some news of the affair, and, in fact, about mid-day, I was informed of his being in the Duchess's apartment, and that in a short time he would wait upon me. So desirous was I of seeing him, that, till he came, every moment seemed to me an hour. I did not wait long before he arrived, and, at presenting himself to me, Miss, said he, you and I may shake hands, for the friendship of Count Termes is equally fatal to all who wish him well; he has killed a man,

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and I am accuſed for it; I was in his houſe to get his wound dreſſed, and the guards, by miſtake, took me for him. I proteſted not to have merited ſuch treatment, yet they conducted me to priſon, and it is well for me that I am univerſally known at Verſailles, or elſe perhaps I ſhould have been baniſhed or put to death for it. He then informed me of every particular that had happened, and ſhewed me a billet from the Count, which he received two hours before, in which he mentioned the place of his refuge, and deſired that Mr. D'Arcore would make it his buſineſs to inform me of every thing. He told me alſo what the Ducheſs, my mother, had ſaid on this affair; the ſentiments, ſaid he, of the Ducheſs fill me with good hopes, ſhe having talked to me about Count Termes, with ſuch eſteem for his courage, as gives me reaſon to believe that ſhe thinks herſelf obligated to him; ſhe even aſked me if the Count was not in want of money, and would have given me an hundred piſtoles to have conveyed to him ſecretly, without letting him know that it came from her hands; but, in his name, I thanked her for the generous offer, and told her that Count Termes wanted for nothing,

nothing, for that I had given him five hundred piſtoles, in order that, after my arreſtment, he might take the road for Holland: She readily gave credit to what I told her, and believes him to be ſeventy leagues off: for the ſecurity of my friend it is abſolutely neceſſary that ſuch news ſhould be ſpread about, and the ſecret of the place of his refuge muſt remain between us two only. His ſudden departure from this kingdom will ſhew his reſpect to the order of the court, nor can a better method be taken to implore his pardon: The farther off he is ſuppoſed to be, the leſs pains will the ſpiteful family of the Marquis B. C. take to get him puniſhed. In the while I ſhall not ceaſe to employ myſelf in his favour at any expence whatſoever; even the Ducheſs has promiſed to have his welfare at heart: all the world ſpeaks in his favour, and the Duke, his protector, bids him keep up his ſpirits. In ſhort, Miſs, all will be ſettled in time, and I hope yet to ſee him your huſband.

To thoſe whoſe hearts are ſuſceptible of tenderneſs, I have no occaſion to obſerve, how much I thought it my duty to eſteem Mr. D'Arcore: 'tis impoſſible to deſcribe the pleaſure I reaped

from this account of the ſecurity of my lover, and how much to his prudence, generoſity, and love, I reputed myſelf obligated. After having thanked him in the beſt manner I was able, I begged of him that he would bring me whatſoever news he ſhould have from Count Termes; he promiſed me that he would be continually going from Verſailles to Paris, and from Paris to Verſailles, to inform me of all that happened, and whatſoever affair required his preſence at Lyons, that he would not go until he ſaw me quiet and contented.

If there exiſted in the world many friends of this ſort, it could not juſtly any longer be called a world of miſery and woe: To have it in their power to do good to others, is the fortune of many, but to have the heart to do it, is the glory of but few. A generous ſoul generally wants wealth, and where riches abound, vile intereſt frequently prevails; but few, perhaps, are the benefactors in the world, becauſe few are the objects which merit their benefits; theſe were the reflections which paſſed in my mind for ſome time after Mr. D'Arcore departed with intention to go the next morning to Paris. Two days after I was viſited by Janeſon, and Miſs Gianetton,

Gianetton, who came to Verſailles expreſsly to ſee me; the heavens, Miſs, ſaid they, at firſt ſight of me, has revenged your injuries with the death of the Marquis B. C. the protector of thoſe three wretches, who ſcandalized your character, and from that moment to this they have altered their way of talking; nevertheleſs they ought not to be truſted; a perſon of your authority and character, ought not to ſuffer them to go unpuniſhed. They have publiſhed a book under the title of "The Wandering Daughter," which does you but little honour, and had you no other reaſon, for that only they merit your reſentment. Here I interrupted them by expreſſing a deſire of ſeeing the book. We are ſatisfied, Miſs, ſaid Janeſon, that your requeſt is very reaſonable, therefore I have not the leaſt difficulty in putting you to a trial which none would be capable to undergo with patience, but a woman of your wiſdom and ſpirit; here is the book, Miſs, ſaid he, taking it out of his pocket and preſenting it to me, read it Miſs without fretting at the contents, becauſe a bad book diſcredits itſelf, and the ignorant ſpite of the author will plainly tend to your juſtification. I laid the

book on the table at that time without even looking into it, and discoursed with them about their own affairs, and told them, that for the love they had shewed to me on other occasions, they merited my attention, I had therefore projected a match between them, which might be the making of their fortune, and in my presence, without more hesitation, it was concluded: Being bound to provide for their mantainance, I had already spoke to Mr. D'Arcore to procure some employ for Janeson, and he had desired me, when I should next see Janeson, to send him to him, that they might consult together on the measures proper to be pursued; accordingly, before they left me, I gave Janeson a billet, with orders to carry it to the palace of the Duke of * * *, where he would be certain to meet with Mr. D'Arcore. When they were gone, I took up the book with an eager impatience to peruse it; I found it printed with an ancient date of some years, to make it appear as if it had been wrote for some other end, and had not been intended for a review of my conduct. Of the stile, or invention, I profess myself no judge, but as for the substance of the work, it contained more falsity than words,

words, and none better than myſelf can teſtify in that point. In ſhort, it was a compoſition of lies founded upon malice, and had not the leaſt appearance of truth: to confront it to theſe my Memoirs, will plainly evidence this truth. Thus much I thought neceſſary to obſerve, leſt ſome one, hereafter, envious of that little glory, which I may poſſibly obtain from this my fatigue, might alledge, that from that book I have copied my adventures, to gain to myſelf the title of a woman of ſpirit.

CHAP. XXIII.

Permiſſion given me by my Mother to retire into a Cloyſter.

MR. D'Arcore returned next week to Verſailles, and after comforting me with the good news of Count Termes' better health, which mended apace, he ſhewed me a billet which he received the day before, and which held him in ſome ſuſpence, becauſe he did not know how to anſwer it till he had firſt communicated it to me to know my ſentiments; he came from Paris ex-

preſſly for this purpoſe, and the billet in queſtion ſaid as follows :

" Dear friend,

" The greateſt favour that can come to me from you, is that of being treated with ſincerity : in a few days I ſhall be perfectly cured ; but what ſignifies my life and health, if I loſe all hopes of my dear Miſs D'Arville. Uſe all the means in your power to diſcover what is to become of her. If ſhe is not to be mine, I will at leaſt have the pleaſure of adding to the death of the Marquis B. C. that of Tartar, Albevit, and Nimar, to compleat, with their blood, hers and my juſt revenge. If I muſt depart baniſhed from all France, I will at leaſt leave an example that will teach others how to reſpect innocence. If you are my friend, you muſt determine my perplexity upon this point ; as to me, there is but little wanting to compleat my deſign.

Adieu."

The billet threw me into the greateſt confuſion : No, ſaid I, immediately to Mr. D'Arcore, I will not have him commit this outrage, and I hope he will obey me, unleſs he has loſt all regard

gard for my perſon and quiet: I cannot promiſe to be his, becauſe I am not at my own diſpoſal; but I can ſafely ſwear, that if I am not his, I ſhall never be anothers: and this ought to be ſufficient to make him lay aſide theſe barbarous ideas, and induce him to give me the conſolation of ſeeing him happy in the world, if I cannot have that of being his wife: tell him, in my name, to leave to heaven the care of puniſhing thoſe villains, for we have no right to require mens lives, though they are ever ſo wicked, their wickedneſs will, in the end, be their own executioner; and by their carrying it to exceſs, they will, at laſt, meet with the puniſhment inflicted by the laws of their country: let them live; and let him think of getting cured, and of obtaining the King's pardon, and ſtill continue to love me, for I will preſerve my oath even at the coſt of my life.

Mr. D'Arcore was pleaſed to ſee my maxims agreeable to his own and conſiſtent with reaſon, and promiſed to tell Count Termes all that I had ſaid; then took his leave with intent to ſee me again the week following.

The billet remained in my hands; for after I had read it I put it careleſly into

into my pocket, and Mr. D'Arcore either forgot it, or did not care to aſk it of me again: this negligence coſt me many tears; but ſo great was my confuſion on the reading of it, that I did not then know what I did. In the mean time my mother advanced faſt in her pregnancy, and on this depended the permiſſion I deſired to retire into a cloyſter; neither the Ducheſs or the Prince had ſpoken to me any more about that head, nor did I mention it to her, becauſe the face of things being changed, I waited to ſee how Count Termes' affairs would end; and my mind was more at eaſe, becauſe there was another alliance on foot between the Lady M. and the Baron of R. which in a few weeks was not only propoſed but celebrated: her nuptials drew from my heart a dart which had pierced it a long while, and removed one obſtacle to my felicity; and if another marriage which was talked of, between the Marquis of M. her brother, and the ſiſter of the Baron R. beforementioned, had likewiſe taken place, it would have added greatly to my ſatisfaction. Notwithſtanding the Ducheſs my mother had been ſo long ſilent with me upon this point, ſhe one day gave

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me motives to renew the memory of thoſe inclinations which made me ſigh for the quiet of a monaſtery; not that I had choſen a retirement on account of the nuptials of Count Termes with Lady M. it was a reſolution ſuggeſted to me by prudence, honour, and love: in whatſoever manner my mother underſtood it, Child, ſaid ſhe to me, I plainly ſee that you want to give the world an example of your amorous fidelity; I have not in the world any more children, and if I ſhould have another hereafter, it might diminiſh my grief in being deprived of you, but would nevertheleſs make me very uneaſy; and to be plain with you, I cannot reſolve to conſent to your marriage with Count Termes, his circumſtances at preſent render it almoſt impoſſible, and you paſſing for daughter to the Duke, my firſt huſband, would make a bad figure in the eyes of the world, by accepting in marriage a perſon that killed your couſin; notwithſtanding this, who knows? with time we may ſee ſtrange alterations; nor would it be a matter of wonder to me to ſee this alſo: the neceſſity to which you are reduced, either to marry the Count, or to retire into a cloyſter, are both equal-

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ly painful to me; not to tell you that they are both impoſſible, but, of the two, I would rather ſee you a nun than a wife.

Well, Madam, replied I, throwing myſelf at my mother's feet, and embracing her knees, what you have to reſolve, reſolve now, dear mother, and diminiſh my affliction; if I am not to be the wife of Count Termes, I ſhall never be wife to another, I have vowed it to him, and I vow it to yourſelf; and you can, if you pleaſe, take from me this miſerable life, but you can never force me to perjure myſelf: I have the courage to convert this neceſſity of my circumſtances into an act of voluntary virtue: if you expect from me an heir to your family, undeceive yourſelf; the happy event of your preſent ſituation, will, I hope, make you the more readily comply to my reaſonable deſires; dread, Madam, the diſappointment of your own hopes, if you oppoſe mine, and uſe me with violence: not expouſing Count Termes, I will obey you as a child ought; but if you deny me the grant of a cloyſter, to oblige me to marry another, you will not treat me as your child; nor will I move from your feet till you reſolve me: do, dear mother!

mother! I conjure you by these most bitter tears, with which I bathe your hands, to determine my fate: what a barbarous pleasure would yours be, by not granting my request, to see me die before your eyes with grief! what will the step-mothers do, when our own mothers act with such cruelty? or what might I expect, had I been daughter to the Duke, a husband so much hated by you, when you treat in this manner the daughter of the Prince of * * * *, the first and last object of your tenderness? I would have proceeded further, so many were the tender sentiments suggested to me by my passionate heart; but was interrupted by my mother, raising me from the ground, I will satisfy you, said she, and from this moment I promise you that you are at liberty, when you please, to retire into a cloyster: do not call me cruel for this; I have been also in your circumstances, yet I still loved the Prince more than myself, and sacrificed my person to the Duke because prudence would have it so; nor can it be doubted, that in so doing I merited the blessing of heaven, which in time found means to reward my love: my example ought to give you courage to wait also with

patience

patience for the completion of your wiſhes; but as you are determined, by this haſty ſtep, to cut off both your own and my hopes, you may depend upon it that I ſhall not oppoſe it; but if you ſhould hereafter have reaſon to repent it, remember that you can blame no one but yourſelf. With theſe words the Ducheſs left me; but notwithſtanding the impreſſion which her diſcourſe made on my ſoul, I was not at all reconciled to the notion of giving my hand in marriage through motives of mere policy, in hopes of meeting with another more to my ſatisfaction after his death; I thought this entirely contrary not only to the maxims of reaſon, but even to the right of nature; how wreched muſt be the life of that unhappy woman, whoſe ſole proſpect of content depends upon the death of her huſband? this would be verifying the vulgar proverb, that women count but two days of felicity in their whole life, which are, that in which they are married, and that in which their huſband dies. My reſolution being fixed, I determined to go into a cloyſter to preſerve myſelf faithful to Count Termes; and having obtained my mother's permiſſion, I thought, from that mo-

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ment, I had leſs reaſon to repine at the ſeverity of my deſtiny: this was the principal object of my thoughts, I continued to love Count Termes, but with a firm reſolution not to ſee him any more; with the hopes that this ſeparation would contribute, in the end, to fix in me an eſteem for him, ſincere and laſting, and which might be rather a pleaſure than pain to myſelf.

CHAP. XXIV.

Illneſs of my Mother, occaſioned by her Miſcarrying, which makes her change her Opinion in regard to me.

MANY days did not paſs after my laſt conference with the Ducheſs, before the news of my reſolution was publickly ſpread about, and I was obliged to put up with the importunities of many who endeavoured to diſuade me from it: the moſt fervent in this office was Madam Cafardo, who wondered that a mind like mine could be capable of ſuch a weakneſs; ſhe wiſhed me to be married to ſome noble perſonage, by whom I might be maintained with great ſplendor and magnificence; and at the ſame time told me, that there now remained not even

the moſt diſtant proſpect of my nuptials with Count Termes, and this was ſufficient for me to give a ſhrewd gueſs from what quarter ſhe received her inſtructions; and excluſive of her acting thus in obedience to my mother's directions, ſhe had alſo, in ſpeaking thus to me, a private view to her own intereſt, expecting that on my fortune hers alſo depended: ſhe entertained great expectations from the promiſes of my parents, as well as from thoſe of ſome other perſon whom ſhe never named to me, and who aimed to marry me to obtain the title and eſtate of my mother, in caſe ſhe ſhould not have a male child by her ſecond huſband. I could never find out who this other pretender was, but Madam Cafardo gave him the higheſt character imaginable. Though my parents never mentioned him to me, her perſuaſions had not the leaſt effect upon my mind; my anſwers were, that my mother was under a neceſſity to keep her word, for I even had choſe the place of my retirement, and this was to be in Rome where I was born; and to this my propoſition my mother had given her conſent. With Count Termes I wanted no longer any connection, not even by letters; and although

although Mr. D'Arcore begged it of me as a favour, he could not induce me to write to him a ſingle line, notwithſtanding any news of him was extremely agreeable; I was alſo under obligations to him for the favours conferred upon Janeſon, by the Duke of ***, his protector, who had given him a place in quality of Keeper of a magnificent Library, with a penſion ſufficient to maintain him and his ſpouſe in a genteel and decent manner. On my being informed of this by Mr. D'Arcore, I deſired him to thank the Count in my name, and to aſſure him, that I ſhould love him till death, and preſerve inviolably my oath of fidelity; but begged of him to give over all hopes of being my huſband, or of ever ſeeing me more.

My unchangeable obſtinacy had taken a great effect on the health of my mother, and ſhe fell on a ſudden into a profound melancholy; nevertheleſs ſhe uſed me with all the tenderneſs of a mother, but ſhe ſtifled the cauſe of her ſorrow within her own breaſt, and kept ſo long her painful ſilence, that her affliction of mind grew every day more viſible, and her uneaſineſs weakened her ſo much, as to render the aſſiſtance of

phyſicians neceſſary; but their advice had been too long neglected, and her illneſs terminated in a miſcarriage, which was very nigh proving fatal to her. 'Tis impoſſible to deſcribe the affliction I laboured under when I ſaw myſelf in danger of loſing her; I loved her for her amiable qualifications, even before I knew her to be my mother, and after knowing her for ſuch, to her felicity I ſacrificed my love, and for her ſake would have laid down my life. Some perſons, 'tis true, made no ſcruple to find fault with this my ſincere and heart-felt grief, and aſſerted, that the death of my mother would open to me a ſhort road for my marriage with Count Termes, and the living a contented life for the future; but with little reaſon did they object to my grief, when it was plainly to be ſeen, that the very thought of loſing ſuch an amiable mother, filled me with horror: My attention, care, and continual tears, might convince her of my grief, ſhould any one have been wicked enough to make the leaſt doubt of my filial affection: For three days and three nights I did not move from her bed one moment: Every compaſſionate caſt of her eyes coſt me a flood of tears, and every groan pierced my very

very heart. If ſhe had known the advantage her ſtate had over my heart at that time, and propoſed to me in marriage whomſoever ſhe thought moſt proper, I ſhould readily have conſented to any thing to have contributed to her eaſe. At the end of three days her illneſs abated, and I had the ſatisfaction to hear the phyſicians pronounce her out of danger, a few days after. She then began to think of me, and calling me one day, after dinner, to her bed-ſide, began to reaſon with me thus: I thank God, my child, I have recovered from a dangerous illneſs, which I thought would have carried me to my grave; heaven is witneſs that my greateſt vexation was that of leaving you, without the conſolation of knowing what was to be your deſtiny: I remember, 'tis true, your reſolution, and my promiſe; but now, when I have ſo narrowly eſcaped from death, have you a heart to involve me in a trouble much more grievous than the firſt, by putting it out of my power to conſider you as a child of mine: Heavens forgive me, ſhould I break my word, but I would have you reflect, that the unhappy event of my illneſs, puts me almoſt under an indiſpenſable neceſſity not to maintain it;

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notwithſtanding you can do what I have granted you, and I ſhall ſee my eſtate diſperſed in ſtrange hands, and be deprived of that conſolation I have ſo ardently deſired, of being bleſſed with a little grand-ſon to inherit my eſtate, and keep up the name of our family: I feel myſelf ſenſibly declining in my conſtitution, with this my ardent, tho' vain deſire, the diſappointment of which, without doubt, will haſten my death; but you, my child, may rely on my word, that you ſhall be ſatisfied and contented. I ſee, without your telling it to me, I ſee very plainly, that we may both obtain our deſires, by my agreeing to your nuptials with Count Termes; if no entreaties or perſuaſions will prevail, eſpouſe him rather than retire to a ſolitude; I will rather ſee you in the arms of ſuch a huſband, but do not expect that with this I can poſſibly be contented; Eſpouſe him, my child, eſpouſe him, if you have the heart to diſpleaſe your father, and diſhonour your mother, and to ſee her in her coffin before you are a wife. My reaſons are already known to you; it is not proper that you ſhould marry the man who killed your couſin; nor is it proper for me to make the wife of a cadet,

det, and who even now is not believed to be my child, the heireſs of my fortune; and laſtly, it is not proper that your father ſhould draw upon himſelf the reſentment of all the relations of the Marquis B. C. by uſing his intereſt to gain a pardon for Count Termes. If theſe reflections take no effect upon your ſoul, pleaſe yourſelf at all events; you will always be my child, and I ſhall always love you as a mother ought to do. I will give you the Marquiſate of V——, in the kingdom of Naples, for your dowry, which was left me by my mother, but do not expect, I tell you again, ever after to ſee me contented. My mother, by theſe expreſſions, in the beſtowing on me a gift, drove me to the neceſſity not to accept of it. She treated me with all ſweetneſs and good nature, when ſhe gave me her permiſſion to retire into a cloyſter, and this gave me ſo much the more uneaſineſs: My anſwer was full of reſpect and love, and with tears, I proteſted I would not diſobey her, even at the coſt of my life. I added a thouſand reaſons in oppoſition to hers, to alter her ſentiments with regard to Count Termes, but all were in vain, and, to mitigate her grief, I was even conſtrained to promiſe that I would lay aſide all thoughts of a cloyſter.

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Thus, I am again deprived of my only comfort, that is, the hopes of preſerving myſelf faithful to Count Termes all my life. My mother thought ſhe had made an extraordinary progreſs with me, becauſe ſhe was intereſted in a ſecret match for me, and which had already been determined, and was fully perſuaded, that having got over the firſt and moſt difficult ſtep, it would not be impoſſible, by degrees, to get over the others, by which means they ſhould be able to attain the end deſired.

Of Count Termes they did not ſpeak in Verſailles, but as if he had been in Holland; Mr. D'Arcore and myſelf only knew of his refuge in the palace of the Duke of * * *, his protector, who uſed his utmoſt endeavours at court to obtain the Count's pardon, but the relations of the Marquis B. C. were ſo rigorous in their efforts to prevent it, that all his trouble was in vain. The ſolitude of Count Termes was leſs painful to him, becauſe he was not afar off, and received from Mr. D'Arcore frequent intelligence of my perſon. When his affairs ſeemed but in an indifferent ſituation, he ſuddenly received news of the death of his eldeſt brother, the Marquis of Olme, who died without iſſue,

iſſue, in conſequence of which his whole eſtate devolved to Count Termes, whoſe affairs upon this changed face in an inſtant: henceforth he ought to be called the Marquis of Olme, but, to prevent any confuſion in my Memoirs, by giving two names to one perſon, I ſhall continue to call him, as before, by the name of Count Termes. His family affairs called him to Avignon, to which place he might go without fear, that city being ſubject, by antient right, to the dominion of Rome, and conſequently for him a place of ſecurity. Mr. D'Arcore was the perſon who brought me this news, aad came to take his leave of me, intending to accompany Count Termes to Lyons, and take that opportunity to look into his own affairs. It may eaſily be imagined how this news rejoiced me; my mother now would tell me no longer that it was not proper for me to marry a cadet; in the room of this ſhe might perhaps find ſome other excuſe, but I could not help looking upon this accident as a peculiar token of the goodneſs of heaven, which would not ſuffer me to be entirely unhappy.

CHAP

CHAP. XXV.

A fortunate Accident, by Means of which Count Termes is called back to Verſailles.

I DO not know which way my mother got intelligence of the Count's good fortune! when ſhe mentioned it to me, I pretended to be ignorant of it, the better to diſcover her ſentiments on that matter; ſhe aſſured me that it gave her the greateſt pleaſure, and even told me, that when they could get the conſent of the relations of the Marquis B. C. and eſpecially that of the Princeſs his mother, that they would not be averſe to my nuptials with Count Termes. Though his condition at preſent made this almoſt impoſſible: Theſe words of my mother were a great advance towards the half my deſires; but what intereſt could I have in his behalf with the Princeſs, and all her relations, who looked upon me as a ſworn enemy of their family, and would not even ſee me? I would have attempted to perſuade her with reaſon, had ſhe been a woman of ſenſe and prudence, but reaſon had no influence over her weak brain, and to talk with her ſeriouſly was of no more

ſervice

ſervice than talking to a block: If I had even reduced her to compaſſion and tears, one word from any of her waiting-maids was ſufficient to make her directly change thoughts. To-day ſhe would ſay one thing, and to-morrow ſhe would forget it, and tell me quite the reverſe.

To remove this inſurmountable obſtacle to my deſires, nothing leſs could have availed than one of thoſe extraordinary combinations of odd circumſtances, which often does more in a few hours, than all the invention of human prudence could have brought about in a long courſe of years: A domeſtick of the Princeſs, my aunt, in whom ſhe much confided, had gone off with a conſiderable ſum of money and jewels; and though the moſt diligent ſearch had been made for him he could not be found. One day, when I leaſt expected her, I was informed by a ſervant that ſhe, in perſon, deſired to ſpeak to me: This viſit ſurprized me, becauſe I thought it untimely, not having ſeen each other for ſome time before, on account of the hatred between us; I accepted of it with ſome ſort of agitation, not knowing for what purpoſe ſhe came, and fearing that ſhe had brought bad news:

news : Dear niece, ſaid ſhe to me, as ſoon as ſhe had ſet down, if you don't help me I am in deſpair ; make them bring me a little lemon water, or my grief will throw me into convulſions : you know already the misfortune that has happened me : will heaven pardon that villain ? I ſhall not talk of the death of my ſon ; heaven has ordained it ſo, and I am in caſe yet, thank God, to get more : we muſt have patience ; let us ſit on this couch, for theſe chairs are too high : I am uneaſy : . . . . O ! bravo ! let us drink this water : . . . . O ! me, they have put too much ſugar in it : Come, no matter, I was going to tell you of that unworthy wretch that has plundered me ; and you muſt know that it is not a trifle : I have had notice this moment that he has taken the road to Holland, where I do not know any perſon that would take him up, with the plunder in his poſſeſſion, unleſs I have recourſe to Count Termes, who ought to know him, becauſe this wretch was his ſervant laſt year : Dear niece, you muſt take the trouble to write to him, that he may make all poſſible ſearch ; for me he ought to do it willingly, becauſe you know that I have always wiſhed him for your huſband : Dear

niece,

niece, I recommend this affair to you: Write with good ink: We ſhall ſee each other another time, then you may perhaps give me ſome good news: at this ſhe went away, as uſual, without ever waiting for my anſwer.

I ſhould have reputed it a felicity for myſelf, as well as Count Termes, had it been in his power to arreſt the thief, but of this there was no probability, becauſe Count Termes was not in Holland, as they ſuppoſed; and to write to him for this purpoſe to Avignon, was unneceſſary: Had it been in his power to gain the good opinion of the princeſs, he would gladly have obliged her: Intereſt was always her weakneſs, and the ruling principle of all her family; for ſhe always took a greater pleaſure in her jewels and money than in her children. At preſent it was a misfortune for me that Count Termes was not in Holland; I would have perſuaded him at whatever coſt, to have found out the thief; but ſuppoſing this to be an impoſſibility, how ſhould I act with the princeſs, who expected ſome anſwer. It was not proper for me to tell her that the Count was not in Holland, and refuſe to diſcover where he was; nor was it proper for me to tell her that he was, and that I

had wrote to him, becauſe the not receiving an anſwer favourable to her deſires, might irritate her the more. I was in this uncertainty for four days, very uneaſy how to act for the beſt, when unexpectedly I received a letter from Lyons from Mr. D'Arcore, in which he told me, that in his journey to Avignon, in company with Count Termes, they met with, at a little diſtance from that city, the ſervant that robbed the Princeſs B. C. well known by them both, and having heard of the robbery two days after they left Paris, they had him taken up upon ſuſpicion, and that by his confuſion he preſently proved himſelf guilty; that Count Termes had in his hands all the jewels and money, and therefore deſired me to take this opportunity to employ my intereſt in his favour.

This news gave me greater pleaſure than any circumſtance that could poſſibly have happened: I began to think in what manner it would be of ſervice to Count Termes, and after being adviſed by the Ducheſs my mother, I went directly to pay the Princeſs a viſit, who no ſooner ſaw me but ſhe ran to meet me. Dear niece, ſaid ſhe immediately, have you brought me any

good

good news concerning my jewels? I think it almoſt impoſſible for you to have an anſwer from Holland ſo ſoon: — a diſh of chocolate for my niece — but mind, of that which I drink myſelf..... What do you ſay, niece, of theſe chairs? are they not more commodious than yours? well; but what news have you got? in which manner have you got it ſo ſoon? — Madam, ſaid I, joking, it was enough when the poſt-man knew it was for you, to make him go like the wind to accompliſh your deſires: what will you give me, if in the term of ten days I can return you all your jewels and money, without even the loſs of twenty piſtoles? What ſhall I give you? replied ſhe, with an incredible joy, I will give you whatever you deſire: — but where is the thief! in whoſe hands are the jewels and money? I will diſpatch a perſon immediately to get them; and whoever will return them ſhall be entitled to all my protection. He that is to return it to you, ſaid I, is Count Termes; all your things are in his hands, and I have in this letter the certainty of it.

Let me ſee the letter, anſwered ſhe, making an offer to take it out of my hand: But, you will excuſe me, Ma-

dam, ſaid I; you know Count Termes is not ſecure in the French dominions, and by letting you ſee the letter, I ſhall alſo let you know where he is; nor will it be conſiſtent with my honour, and your gratitude, to deſire it: content yourſelf that accidentally he found him, and, in regard to your perſon, has cauſed him to be arreſted: be ſatisfied that he has got all your things in his own hands, and tell me to whom he muſt conſign them, with ſufficient ſecurity from the perſon who receives them, and do not deſire more. O! Miſs, indeed you teach me wrong, replied the Princeſs, I will have my own way in one more point, which is no more than I ought to have, that is, to be grateful for the ſervices done me: I underſtand you; I will immediately take proper ſteps, that wherever Count Termes is, he may be ſecure; and do you write to him, in my name, to keep all faſt, and for him to prepare againſt the firſt notice I give you, to come in perſon with the things to me at Verſailles.

The recompence, added I, that you make him, Madam, is ſo much ſuperior to his expectation, that he will hardly believe it from my word only; if

if you would assure him of it yourself, by writing a couple of lines, he would accept this kindness as recompence sufficient. Willingly, replied the Princess, I will write in an instant, and you must take care to send it where it will be sure to find him; nor is it a little that I do this to shew him my gratitude, for I believe it is ten years since I wrote a word.

So said, she wrote a short but significant letter, promising him, that she would secure his return to Versailles as soon as possible. A promise of this sort, and under-written by her own hand, I thought was security enough for her not to change her mind, as she commonly did when any one persuaded her to the contrary, and therefore I thought that I had obtained a great deal from her. My mother was content; and for me to be more content, nothing now remained but to wait in hopes that the event would correspond with this promising beginning.

CHAP. XXVI.

My Nuptials are finally appointed with Count Termes, and by an horrible Accident again interrupted.

THE Princeſs, my aunt, was reduced to a ſtep which, according to her character, I may ſay was very extraordinary: the pardon which ſhe promiſed to grant to the Count, was an act of virtue, and a diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of a noble ſoul, and ſuch an inſtance of generoſity as ſhe perhaps, in all her actions, either before or after, never equalled: had ſhe been petitioned to grant ſuch a favour to Count Termes, through real motives of generoſity, ſhe would not then have liſtened to reaſon; but now, from whatever cauſe it proceeded, ſhe did it without the leaſt intreaty; though the nature of the circumſtance through which the favour was beſtowed, diminiſhed not a little the glory of the donor: the Princeſs however kept her word, and in the ſpace of two days had almoſt prevailed with her relations, and the court, that the Count might come without any moleſtation to Verſailles. My parents

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at this ſhewed the greateſt ſatisfaction, and told me, that only one obſtacle now remained to prevent their conſent to my nuptials, and this was, that the match ſhould be likewiſe approved of by the King; the thing was eaſy to be obtained, but they did not care to ſhew themſelves ſo much intereſted in my marriage, through fear of giving people ſuſpicion of my being their child: this was a point they could not diſpenſe with for various reaſons; they were willing that I ſhould marry Count Termes, but deſired to make a merit of their conſent with the Princeſs B. C. and the court, the better to eſtabliſh their own reputation and my fortune: this laſt difficulty was eaſily ſurmounted, and my mother herſelf inſtructed me how I ſhould manage matters with the Princeſs B. C. I waited with impatience for that fortunate moment in which I could have the pleaſure to behold the Count once more in the good graces of the court, and with univerſal conſent allotted for my ſpouſe. I received ſoon after the joyful news; for the Princeſs B. C. came to pay me a viſit, and informed me, that ſhe had obtained a grant for Count Termes, and that the next day at fartheſt ſhe would get

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the permiſſion in writing to have him recalled. I took this opportunity to tell her, that ſhe only had it in her power to put the laſt hand to ſo great a benefit, by interceeding with the Prince and Ducheſs to give their conſent to my being his wife: this I had no occaſion to requeſt a ſecond time, for before ſhe went away ſhe ſpoke to them both concerning it, and pretended to have more authority in the diſpoſal of my perſon than they had themſelves; which my father and mother could not object to, as I paſſed for the daughter of the Duke, her brother; and, in fact, the Ducheſs and the Prince were conſtrained to acknowledge, that ſhe was the perſon who ought to diſpoſe of my hand; that till then they had ſhewed a repugnance to the match, as doubting whether it would be agreeable to her; but that ſhe being agreeable to it, they were content, and glad to find her ſo well ſatisfied therewith; and before that meeting was broke up, my nuptials with Count Termes were firmly agreed to by all the parties preſent. Imagine then my ſatisfaction, when I ſaw myſelf, after ſo many ſtorms, at the mouth of the harbour, and ſo nigh partaking the

the fruit of my fidelity : but I did not reflect that Count Termes was yet afar off, that I was not yet his wife, that on human affairs there is no dependence, and that some unfortunate accident might yet be sufficient to break the laugh on my lips, and turn my joy into tears. Mr. N. N. was all this while at Paris, and was on the point of returning to Venice, but first came to take leave of me, and renew his generous offers : I enquired about Rosaura, his waiting-maid, to know whether he intended to take her with him to Venice ? he answered me, that her brother, who had gained a fortune in the army, being arrived at Paris, he intended to rid himself of her by leaving her in his care, and who had an intention to marry her to a man of his own acquaintance : I have made her, said he, a present of two hundred pistoles for her jointure, but shall think no more of her ; if I should carry her back to my house I could never after depend on her behaviour, for having once fallen, she may easily be drawn into a second false step which she may never be able to repair : in the little time I have tarried at Paris, I have observed her carriage with attention, and I see no hopes

hopes of bringing her into prudent resolutions: I do not know, even by sight, him that seduced her in Venice; here he is called by the name of Albevit, but there he went under a different name, and I have strong motives to believe that she has yet some connection with him: however, she is nothing more to me; I have left her in the care of her brother, whom I have acquainted with every thing, and she cannot be angry with any one but herself.

He acted with sense; but I was greatly vexed that a girl, in the bloom of her youth, should proceed in that manner for want of serious reflections: I had not seen her for some time, having always invented some excuse to avoid receiving her disagreeable visits, thro' fear that they would redound but little to my honour: the event sufficiently proved that my conduct in that respect was right, and that the suspicions of Mr. N. N. concerning her connection with the unworthy Albevit were too true, and appeared in so scandalous a light, that her brother, a man of sense and honour, was involved on that account in a scene of bloodshed, which cost me many tears, and plunged me into a sudden and unforeseen confusion

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and trouble. Since I ſpoke laſt to the Princeſs, my aunt, and my marriage with Count Termes was agreed upon, was exactly four days, and ſoon after Mr. N. N. departed from Verſailles on his return to Venice, a Comedy was acted at Verſailles, in which the principal performers were Tartar and Albevit, who, according to their jeſting talents, were heard with approbation: Nimar, who was the third of Lucifer's aſſiſtants, had no fixed employ in that company, becauſe he wanted the ability for it, but rendered himſelf neceſſary to the others by his œconomy and care in promoting their advantage: their particular prerogatives were to be great pratlers, great travellers, and head-ſtrong to exceſs; daring all things, and bluſhing at nothing. Between theſe three, tho' they were all of one model, that is, three villains, there was continual riot, in ſuch manner that they were obliged ſeveral times to be ſilenced by the guards; that ſame night that the Princeſs B. C. had been talking to me, they came to blows upon the ſtage about ſome affairs between themſelves, and it grew to ſuch a height that it would have ran to greater lengths, had they not been prevented by the interpoſition of ſome people in authority.

authority. Both parties being reconciled they were friends as before, and took their leave of each other, seemingly as well satisfied as if nothing had happened. The next morning Albevit and Tartar were found dead in the streets, the first shot in the temple, and the other ran through the body with a sword: this affair made a great noise at Versailles, and most believed, at first, that, on account of their difference the night before, they had massacred each other; though the fact was not likely, for there were more than one that had seen them sup together very friendly, and together go from their lodging at twelve o'clock at night, to pay a visit to a particular acquaintance that lived but a little distance from the place where they were murdered: it was pretended, that in the murder there must be more than one person concerned, because they had not time even to draw their swords to defend themselves. This accident at first neither pleased or displeased me; for though both of them had persecuted me, I submitted the chastisement of them to the justice of heaven; my surprize was very great, and my grief equal to my surprize, when it was suddenly spread in the

mouths

mouths of every one, that Count Termes was the perſon who had murdered theſe villains, and that there was ſufficient proof of the truth of it. Tho' I believed it to be falſe, I could not help trembling through fear; Count Termes was afar off from Verſailles, nor would he offer to attempt it, after my forbidding it, unleſs he firſt gave me notice: of my diſapprobation of this affair no one was partaker but Mr. D'Arcore, and after the Count's hearing from him the proſpect there was of our good fortune, to dare to commit ſuch an action would be the ſure means to obſtruct it; and the temper of my lover, though it was hot, was not violent, or blood-thirſty. All theſe reflections were enough to juſtify him at my tribunal; but the world in general did not know this, and judged as they thought proper, according to their conjectures. I did not know what was the proof they talked of, but I knew, to my extreme grief, that none believed him to be innocent. The princeſs B. C. would not ſpeak one word in his favour; ſhe even aggravated, by the circumſtances of the accident, the death of her ſon, and wanted to ſend a perſon to Count Termes to get what was

hers out of his hands, that she might not have occasion to write to him any more letters. My parents looked upon him as a man unworthy of their daughter, and one continually in disgrace at court, and were for persuading me never to think of him more. This reduced my fidelity to such a low ebb, that I was never in so much danger of proving inconstant.

CHAP. XXVII.

A new Accident happens to clear up the Innocence of Count Termes.

AS much as they said to me against Count Termes, they could never induce me to believe him culpable; but what signified that I forgave him when all the rest of the world condemned him, and I myself was condemned to lose him? they talked so confidently of his being the murderer, that I was constrained by love to bid Mr. D'Arcore advise him to fly from France, in which place he was not secure; and my grief at such a thought grew to such a height, that I was almost in despair. One day, in the midst of my lamentations, word was brought to me that in the anti-chamber was one Madam

dam Roſaura, who inſtantly deſired to ſee me: excluſive of the motives above-mentioned, which I had not to accept her viſits, I was then too much agitated by my paſſion to have the leaſt deſire of being viſited by any perſon whatſoever; I civily ſent her word that I found myſelf indiſpoſed, and would be glad of her company another time: this would not ſatisfy her, for ſhe ſent me back an anſwer, that ſhe came upon an affair of importance, which gratitude compelled her to communicate to me. I ordered her to be admitted, more for her importunity than my own curioſity to know what ſhe had to ſay. I never could have expected, Miſs, ſaid ſhe to me, to have it in my power, as I have at preſent, to make a return for the good you have done me in drawing me from the brink of my precipice, by which action you will always merit my gratitude: it is not to be wondered at that I ſhould know your regard for Count Termes, when it is known to all Paris; and I hear, to my diſpleaſure, that he is blamed for the death of them two wretches, when I know how ſenſibly this unjuſt accuſation muſt afflict you: but no one can better prove his innocence than myſelf: they have

bought their death by their own ſcandal, in giving it out that they had a criminal connection with me, when I had not the leaſt intimacy with them; and the perſon that killed them was my own brother, who did it to vindicate my honour: you are ſurpriſed, Miſs, to hear a ſiſter accuſe her own brother, when it depends upon my ſilence that he is believed innocent; but, in the firſt place, my brother is already in ſafety; and ſecondly, he has killed them without my knowledge, as this letter will ſhew you, and it is proper that innocence ſhould always be juſtified: it is eight days exactly ſince my brother came to Verſailles, and in two days after he was to return to Paris: from that time to this I have not ſeen him: in this time the accident has happened, and yeſterday only I received his letter, from which I cannot find out the place of his refuge, but am well informed that the fact was committed by him; nor does he wiſh to have it concealed, becauſe the publication of it ſweetens his revenge: this accident has bee attended with circumſtances very diſagreeable to me; for inſtead of geting me a huſband and repairing my honour, he has taken with him, in his

flight,

flight, two hundred piſtoles, given me by Mr. N. N. and I ſhall remain without either huſband or jointure. Here ſhe burſt into tears. Grieve not, ſaid I, interrupting her, the providence of heaven will provide for you; that providence which never lets virtue go unrewarded: by this diſcovery, you render me a ſervice for which I cannot recompence you ſufficiently, was I to give you all I have: by clearing the innocence of Count Termes, you eſtabliſh my quiet, and I ſhall be ever indebted to do the beſt in my power for you: I hope you will not object to leaving this letter in my hands, ſince it cannot prejudice either your brother or you, and I ſhall make no other uſe of it than what can be of ſervice to Count Termes, without doing an injury to any one elſe: in the while, take theſe hundred piſtoles and ſupply your preſent wants, and before theſe are gone I hope you will have reaſon to praiſe my gratitude.

Roſaura being gone, I read over the letter, which contained theſe words:

" Dear Siſter,

Do not be ſurpriſed at not ſeeing me for ſome days paſt, becauſe perhaps you

will never see me more: I came to Paris not so much for your sake, as to revenge myself on Tartar, by whom I was offended in Italy; and uniting his death with that of the unworthy Albevit, I have united mine to your revenge: if I had lost this fine occasion, in which I found at my command two hundred pistoles, bestowed on you by Mr. N. N. perhaps I should never have had another opportunity: excuse me, if I abandon you; but as you have subsisted till this time without me, you know also how to do it for the time to come. Adieu.

Your BROTHER."

The joy this news produced in me I cannot describe; I was glad that I had always acted consistent with virtue, and with an inclination to do good to every one: I saw myself indebted to Rosaura for her good will towards me, for being so good to her once before, and from that moment studied in what manner to make her an adequate return. In the letter she left me, I may say, I had a torch which discovered to every one, by its light, the innocence of Count Termes; but I knew not in my circumstances how to make use of it, to

persuade

perſuade the world of ſuch a truth: coming from the hands of a perſon ſo much intereſted in his behalf, they might ſuſpect it to be a cheat; and to communicate it to my parents, was the ſame as expoſing myſelf to ſome new reflection which might oppoſe my deſires more than ever: if I could but preſent myſelf to the King, I ſhould have courage to lay before him the truth, and induce him to hearken to reaſon; but this for me was impoſſible, not having any other opportunity of ſeeing him but in the preſence of all the court, which would by no means ſuit with the nature of this affair. The only method therefore for me to take, was that of ſending the letter to Count Termes, that with it he might clear his own innocence; in this there was no danger, nor would even my name be mentioned, he not confeſſing that the letter came from me. His juſtification might perhaps be deferred for ſome weeks more, on account of his being ſo far off; but I muſt have patience, and of the two ills I thought this the moſt eligible. With theſe reſolutions I ſat down to a table to write; the hour being ſuitable to my buſineſs, becauſe it was night, and my mother

with

with Madam Cafardo was out of the houſe : I had not yet wrote one line, when I was interrupted by Mr. Befone, who, opening the door, aſked me, if I had any one with me? For why? anſwered I, with ſurprize, there is no one; you may come in. Then, replied he, I will come; and making two ſteps back as to give place to another, I ſaw before me Count Termes: Heavens! I cried out, getting up in haſte from my chair, what contrary deſtiny brings you to Verſailles? how can you venture to put your foot within my door? do you not know the danger you are in? I know all, Miſs, anſwered he; but, above all, I know I am innocent: I know that I have no regard for my own life, if I am to live from you; and under your eyes, in the oppoſition of malice and envy, I will either juſtify myſelf or die. No, replied I, you will not die, becauſe your vindication is in my hands; this letter ſhall prove you innocent: I ſhall tell you another time from whom I received it, but now for heaven's ſake retire, that no one may ſurpriſe us; if Mr. D'Arcore came with you, tell him to ſee me to-morrow; I will conſign to him the letter of your juſtification, and

and together we will consult upon those means which may be most favourable to you. He wanted to reply, but I compelled him almost by force out of the room; and my heart foreboded something when I made use of that violence, for a few moments after my mother came home, and immediately came to my apartment, while Count Termes, with the favour of the night and help of Mr. Besone, got off without being observed. My mother desired me to dress in masquerade and to go with her to court, where there was a ball, that being the last night of the carnival; upon which I dressed myself in a domino' of rose-colour sarcenet, trimmed with narrow silver-lace, and followed her with seeming good will; though knowing that Count Termes was in Versailles, it kept me from enjoying any satisfaction.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The Conſequences which proceeded from my Converſation at the Ball.

THE feaſt of that night was ſo elegant, and the company ſo numerous, that what with the crowd and the noiſe of dancing, I was utterly unable to indulge thoſe thoughts which merited all my attention. After walking up and down a long time, admiring the magnificence, I retired to another room to enjoy the freſh air, and found in that place three or four people maſqued, who withdrew for the ſame purpoſe. One of them was dreſſed in a plain orange-colour domino', and courteouſly made room for me to ſit on the couch on which himſelf was ſeated: after preſenting me with ſome excellent ſweetmeats, he fell into diſcourſe with me. When we don't know with whom we are talking, we ought to be prudent and cautious in what we ſay: he aſked me, if I liked dancing as much as he did himſelf? to which I anſwered, Sir, your mind I do not know, nor ought the fancy of one perſon to be a law for that of others: I, for my part, do not find

find dancing agreeable to my manner of thinking; I do not know for what reaſon I ſhould torment my limbs with movements abſolutely unnatural, for the ſake of mere diverſion, and preſume to explain, by ridiculous ſteps and ſtrange poſtures, the internal agitations of the ſoul, when we can explain them with our tongues given us for that purpoſe: to prove the abſurdity of this amuſement, it will be ſufficient, while you are attentive to any dance whatſoever, to ſtop your ears in ſuch manner as to ſhut out the harmony of the muſic which accompanies it, and the dancers will ſeem like ſo many mad people, who move and know not for what: 'tis plain therefore that the harmony of the muſic is that which renders the dance delightful; and without the dance we can enjoy the ſame pleaſure, and to my judgment more reaſonable, becauſe we have the pleaſure without that mixture of abſurd geſticulations, which, being contrary to nature, are no better than madneſs. From your manner of diſcourſe I perceive, replied he, that you delight in muſic, and would give this the preference to every thing elſe. I give it, ſaid I, that honour which it ought to have, as an art which has

great

great influence over our ſouls, and extends its dominions over all our paſſions: as to dancing, I am not one of them who vilify it only for argument ſake, and, to render it more delightful, make it ridiculous. We are in a ſeaſon now in which muſic is in great repute, and, as they think, to add to its charms, they join with it ſo many objects of buffoonery. I would have ſpoke more upon this ſubject but he interrupted me, ſaying, This is philoſophiſing on our follies, and as you are a philoſopher, I know alſo that you ought to think contrary to the remainder of the world; if every thing ridiculous offends you, it will be needleſs to aſk you, how you like comedies, an art which in theſe days is ſo greatly improved that it might be reputed a ſchool of the moſt rigorous morals. All is well, replied I; but will it be always ſo? if all the world were philoſophers, it would not be an abyſs of miſery; but to make them all philoſophers, the theatre muſt not be the only ſchool for that purpoſe: every one may run to it, but every one is not capable to reap benefit therefrom; and where every one is readily diverted with bad maxims, a good one will be praiſed by few, and learned, I may ſay,

ſay, by none: putting in a ſcale the benefit that can accrue from comic repreſentations, with the detriment which good morals may receive therefrom, muſic is, without doubt, by a thouſand degrees the moſt eligible; but it is not my buſineſs to ſet myſelf up as a reformer of the modern cuſtoms. This man for certain muſt have been a ſtrong advocate for comedies, becauſe he began warmly to defend it, and greatly lamented the loſs the French theatres had ſuſtained by the death of Albevit and Tartar, and acknowledged them to be really two villains, but excellent in their profeſſion. In this point I was too much intereſted to let this go without making ſome anſwer; I obſerved withal, in general terms, that I did not approve of the fact, nor condemn it: but when he let ſlip ſome words againſt Count Termes, by which he ſeemed to believe him guilty of the murder, I could no longer conceal the ſentiments of my mind: You, likewiſe, Sir, ſaid I, are in the number of thoſe who would repreſent Count Termes as guilty of a fact of which he cannot juſtify himſelf becauſe he is a this time afar off, and of whoſe innot cence, I dare to ſay, that I can giv-

ſufficient proof. This is impoſſible, replied he, for I am privy to ſome circumſtances which muſt condemn him, and will not admit of an anſwer. Cannot have an anſwer! added I with ſome heat, I have got ſufficient proof in my own hands which will defend him; now I ſhould be glad to know what any reaſonable judge between us both could think, in ſuch a caſe, on our affirmations. He muſt examine, and ſee, replied he. But at that moment another perſon maſqued, with a domino' quite like his own, paſſed by, and he got up to whiſper ſomething to the other, and I gladly embraced that opportunity to rid myſelf of him, by going into the great hall and mixing amongſt the reſt of the company. When my mother was wearied with dancing, we retired home, where I paſſed the reſt of that night reflecting on what had happened to me, and fearful leſt my tenderneſs for Count Termes might have ſhewn me guilty of an imprudence; the next day at dinner the Prince my father gave me ſome news which made me change colour, and at firſt troubled me not a little, telling me, to get ready towards evening to wait upon the King, who had occaſion to ſpeak with me. What

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can he want with me? added I, fearfully; to which he anſwered, that if I did not know it, he did not, and ſaid no more; nor did he ſpeak another word during dinner. I immediately feared that what I had ſaid the night before gave occaſion for this call, and even ſuſpected that I had unknowingly ſpoke to the King himſelf, and of this I had no reaſon to repent, becauſe my words would not be altered by the relations of others; had I been certain of this, I ſhould have reputed myſelf happy, becauſe I ſhould then have permiſſion to juſtify Count Termes; but my fears perſuaded me that I had ſpoken to ſome evil-minded perſon, who would repreſent what I had ſaid in a different light: beſides this, I thought that my parents had implored the royal authority to oblige me to take another huſband, and at the thoughts of this my ſpirit was daunted. Before the hour came in which I was to be preſented to the King by my mother, Mr. D'Arcore came to ſee me, and his viſit gave me ſome conſolation: I ſhould have done injuſtice to a friend like him, if I had not informed him of my inquietude: he was of opinion that there was more reaſon to hope than to fear, and adviſed

me to carry with me the letter of the Count's juſtification, that I might uſe it if occaſion ſhould offer, and aſked me, if I had ſtill the billet of Count Termes, left by him in my hands, in which the Count threatened the death of thoſe wretches? I then recollected that billet, like a dream which had happened ſome months before; I turned my writings up-ſide down, but all was in vain, and notwithſtanding the ſtricteſt ſearch, it was not to be found, nor could I tell where I had loſt it. This, ſaid Mr. D'Arcore, is the evident proof which they have got to condemn our friend; it is well for him that this other letter will prove the contrary, otherwiſe there would be no hopes: but how, or where have you loſt it?

This was the point that tormented my mind, but neither then, or ever after, could I remember which way I loſt it. Twice in my life I had betrayed my memory, by loſing two billets which were both of the utmoſt conſequence to me; one of them was that which Mr. D'Arcore aſked for, and the other was that which I had wrote to the Prince one night at Paris, and by which in time he diſcovered me to be his daughter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Discovery of the Innocence of Count Termes, who is again received into Favour at Court.

WHEN Mr. D'Arcore was departed, of two things I remained perſuaded, which were, that in the billet I loſt there was undoubtedly the accuſation of Count Termes, and that what the King deſired to ſpeak to me was not concerning this; notwithſtanding I went to him prepared for all events. To him I was introduced by my mother, and he received me with an affability that would inſpire courage in the moſt timorous. Miſs, ſaid he to me, it has been intimated to me that you have got undeniable proofs of of Count Termes' innocence in the death of the two players: it is the duty of thoſe who adminiſter in the world the juſtice of heaven, not only to puniſh the guilty, but alſo to clear the innocent; and I would willingly hear from your mouth the arguments which you have in proof of his innocence; and I have reaſon to believe that they

are not dictated by your love for him, becauſe you have ſhewed yourſelf ſuperior to the weakneſs of your ſex; I ſhould therefore be glad to give you the opportunity of contributing to the juſtification of a perſon who, was it for your ſake only, merits alſo from me ſome regard: but before you produce his defence, it is proper you ſhould know the weight of his accuſation, to anſwer directly, and not bluſh at being in the wrong: look, Miſs, into this paper of Count Termes, which accuſes himſelf: who is it that at ſeeing him thus ſelf-condemned, can make any doubt of his guilt?

He then preſented to me the paper, which I found to be Count Termes' billet that I had loſt ſome time paſt, and would have ſtruck me immoveable had I not had in my pocket his defence. Pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwered I, I require no proof to believe you juſt; yet even monarchs are but men, and it is not doing them any wrong, though we believe them to be ſubject to error; becauſe in committing of it unknowingly, and thro' motives reaſonable in appearance, they are not unjuſt.

I confeſs this to be a clear indictment againſt Count Termes, nor would it appear againſt him had I not loſt it, but here is another in oppoſition to it which will undoubtedly certify to the contrary; your Majeſty will read, and form a judgment accordingly. I preſented him the letter given me by Roſaura; nor can I tell which was greateſt, his ſurprize, or his pleaſure: My king, proceeded I, the innocence of Count Termes is indiſputable; but if it ſhould be doubted, only examine the perſon to whom that letter was wrote, and compare the character to others of her brother's, which ſhe has got in poſſeſſion: Enquire whether ſuch a perſon has lately left Paris or Verſailles, ſince that fact was comitted; and can there be more deſired to prove Count Termes innocent; but, if he is innocent, and, if in conſequence of ſuch a black ſuſpicion, he has loſt his reputation, his ſpouſe, and that, which is moſt of all, the good will of his king: Alas! I implore of your Majeſty once more to render him your favour, his reputation, and his ſpouſe, and make us both indebted to your Majeſty for our felicity and fortune: I ſaid no more than this, but ſaid it with ſuch, and ſo

many

many expreſſions of a hundred confuſed affections, which proceeded from my heart to my lips, that he acquitted me with a ſmile, and told me that he would ſee me content.

I returned to my room, rejoicing that Count Termes' innocence was cleared, and cleared by my means, ſo that if he could glory in having vindicated me, I could alſo glory in having ſaved him: My imprudence the night before, I now thought moſt fortunate, becauſe it gave me room to conceive a thouſand good hopes, but I could not reſt without communicating it to the Count, he being the half of myſelf; I expected Mr. D'Arcore every moment, ſuppoſing him to be impatient to know what happened, but I did not ſee him till the next day. My father, that ſame evening, came into my room, and embracing me with a tranſport of joy, Conſole yourſelf, my daughter, ſaid he to me, heaven has been pleaſed to gratify your deſires; you'll be wife to Count Termes, whom you have wiſhed for this long time, and you would have been ſo before, had the fatal combination of ours, and his circumſtances, permitted it: Write to him before you go to reſt; tell him that his Majeſty

deſires

desires to see him at court, and that I also wait for him at Versailles, to give him, with your hand, a sure bond of my esteem and tenderness. There is no occasion to write to him, replied I, and there is less to wait for him, because he is not afar off. If you will only send to Mr. D'Arcore at his lodgings, he will immediately inform you where to find Count Termes, being both arrived together at Versailles two days past: So much the better, added my father, I shall have the pleasure to sollicit your nuptials, least some new disorder might frustrate them: We shall talk about it to-morrow; so said, he left me, and this was without doubt the happiest night I had known for a long time past. The next day, towards evening, being called into my mother's apartment, I found Count Termes, with Mr. D'Arcore, and soon after were joined by my father; who can tell what pleasure this meeting gave me? wished for in vain so long a time, and which was to be the foundation of my felicity during the rest of my days.

Here it was the contract of my nuptials were drawn and signed in the most valid form: My mother gave me for a dowry, the Marquisate of V——, in the

the kingdom of Naples. Count Termes having projected to part with ſome lands which he poſſeſſed in France, and being deſirous to change them for others belonging to the Marquis M. in Italy, of which he wanted to diſpoſe, had occaſion for an immenſe ſum to ballance the exchange; Mr. D'Arcore generouſly offered him a ſupply, under the title of its being lent, and to be paid again at the pleaſure of his friend. All the eſtate of my parents was to fall to their firſt ſon, if they ſhould have one, and, in caſe there ſhould be none, I was to be miſtreſs of all after their death; theſe articles being finiſhed, were given to the care of a prudent lady, who was poſſeſſed of great wealth, not only in France, but alſo in Italy, without being the leaſt prejudice to the reputation of my parents, by declaring me a princeſs, and their lawful heir; all they now wanted was to ſee what I could get towards my jointure from the relations of the Duke, my ſuppoſed father, and by their hopes they expected not a little. The diſpoſition of this appertained to the Princeſs B. C. my ſuppoſed aunt. Count Termes had yet in his hands all the money and jewels ſtole from her by her ſervant, and my father was of opi-

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nion that it was adviſeable, dexterouſly to defer returning it, until ſhe had firſt ſettled on me ſomething reaſonable: As it happened, fortune then favoured me, for there was not need of many perſuaſions to make her do as they deſired: She made me a preſent in ready money of one thouſand piſtoles, and aſſigned to me another penſion annually, of five hundred piſtoles, from her capitals in the banks of Rome and Genoa. In this manner the greateſt part of my little eſtate lay in Italy, and it ſeemed that heaven having ordained an Italian woman for my mother, was alſo pleaſed that I ſhould ſpend the remainder of my days in a country by me ſo much delighted in, perhaps becauſe I was born there. Paris and Verſailles were in a moment full of the news of my nuptials: Of me they then talked as of an admirable woman, endowed with the moſt amiable accompliſhments, and extraordinary talents. This public praiſe did not make me in the leaſt vain of myſelf, becauſe I was convinced by a long experience, of the ſickleneſs of popular diſcourſe, which glides along, according to the current, like the cork upon the ſurface of the water; to-day they will exalt to the ſtars a perſon, whom

but

but yesterday they spared no pains to degrade; an evident sign that yesterday and to-day, they acted equally without reason; we ought not therefore to puff ourselves up with their praises or be dejected at their reproaches.

CHAP. XXX.

My Nuptials; Voyage to Lyons; and my unexpected meeting at that Place with People known by me in Italy.

THE celebration of my nuptials was not deferred longer than fifteen days, and from that moment in which they were celebrated, I took the title of Lady Marchioness of V——, which I hold to this day. On such like occasions, others place their glory and felicity in rumour, magnificence, and feasting, as if all our life was squeezed into the day of our nuptials: I understood it in a different light, and, as I placed my felicity in enjoying quietly, a happiness by me so long wished for; so I desired that my nuptials might be celebrated privately: and though my parents would have spared no expence for my honour, yet they consented to every thing which was agreeable to myself.

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In a country-seat, that belonged to my father, I passed two weeks in company with my spouse, and Mr. D'Arcore, at the end of that time we returned to Versailles. The pleasure I took to live in retirement is almost incredible; and this love of solitude, according as I advanced in years, increased in me every day, and did not proceed from an unsociable temper in me, but from the principle of good thoughts suggested to me by reason, which, according to my manner of thinking, was to me indispensable.

Of the men I had a very indifferent opinion, and the world, to my eyes, with all its grandeur, merited an absolute contempt; considering that our honour, our substance, and even our life itself, is at the mercy of ill-disposed minds, nor are we ever well secure but when we are alone: this my love for solitude, which I thought consistent with felicity, rendered the court very disagreeable to me; and to enjoy some moments of liberty in company with my beloved spouse, I obtained, by force of intreaties, permission of my tender mother to go with him for some months to Provence, at which place his domestic affairs rendered his presence absolutely necessary. We departed

from Verſailles the beginning of ſummer, and after a pleaſant journey, of a few days, arrived at Lyons. Mr. D'Arcore had returned there a little after our nuptials; imagine the joy produced in him by this unexpected viſit, of which he had not the leaſt notice: To do us honour on our arrival he ſpared no expences, and the reception he gave us, according to his unbounded generoſity of heart, was much ſuperior to what could poſſibly be expected from a gentleman of his private fortune; and knowing that I took more delight in the quality of the perſons, than in the number of them, he deſired that we would retire together a few days to his country-ſeat: This was the very place, witneſs to my firſt inquietude after the death of Celeſtina, only companion of my flight from Avignon, and partaker of my firſt tenderneſs; that room which I had bathed with ſo many tears: the avenues and walks, in which I lamented ſo much, were now changed into a place of peace and tranquility, of a ſweetneſs which I could wiſh never to have finiſhed: our converſation was reduced to three only, but each of us contributed what we could to render it agreeable and delightful;

ful; and we could say, in reality, that we were three people entirely content with ourselves. I was walking one day in company with Mr. D'Arcore, and my husband, on the great road that leads to Paris, when I saw a post-chaise pass by, and in it two persons, whom I thought I had seen before. Count Termes, on whom they made the same impression, ran on before them, calling to the postilion to stop, who immediately obeyed: The gentleman that was in it, looked out to know the reason he stopped, but could not comprehend it; the lady, who sat upon the right-hand, towards us, did the same, and called to the servant to open the door that she might dismount: What was my surprize and pleasure when I knew her to be the Countess N. N. of Pavia, and the officer that was with her, to be the Marquis D. R. that young lad who ran away from his school during my campaign in Italy, and by my means made a cornet in the army: between her and Count Termes, passed a hundred congratulations, mixed with as many reproaches, whilst at me they both looked with attention and astonishment, because, by a sign, I had given my husband notice to say nothing about me.

The Counteſs was the firſt who compli-mented me in general terms, but could not long forbear aſking me, if I had not a brother that had been in the army in Italy, called Count Richard, and whom I reſembled exactly: The Marquis D. R. ſeconded her queſtion, for he alſo at that inſtant recollected him. I agreed that Count Richard was my brother, and now brother-in-law to the Count my ſpouſe; they then renewed their compliments, which made me almoſt burſt into a fit of laughter: They were deſirous to relate to me all that had happened to them with Count Richard, when I, all the while, was better informed of it than themſelves. My inability to refrain from laughter, made me betray my own ſecret, and to keep them no longer in ſuſpence, Mr. D'Arcore related to them the whole affair. The Counteſs kiſſed and ſqueezed me in ſuch a manner that I thought ſhe would never have left off, and the Marquis D. R. lamented at my transformation from a man to a woman, becauſe he could not do the ſame: They wanted to proceed directly on their journey, but they had to deal with a man, who ſought occaſions to be generous, and who would by no means ſuffer them to depart.

depart. The joy and mirth with which we paſſed the remainder of that day, is not eaſy to be expreſſed: The Counteſs had eſpouſed the Marquis ſome months before. The relations of their amours ſerved us that evening for an entertainment; ſhe was a widow, and he was the pooreſt of his family, but by the death of his brother he became heir to an immenſe fortune, and in the army won a conſiderable ſum by gaming: This put them in a ſtate to ſatisfy their inclinations, by uniting together their fortunes. They were going to Paris on a party of pleaſure, with intention to return to Italy in a few months; but it happened that I arrived there before them. An excellent ſupper put an end to their adventures, from which we did not riſe till it was late at night. The days following Mr. D'Arcore procured all poſſible entertainment for his gueſts: the Marquis D. R. paid his reſpects to me, as my huſband did likewiſe to the Counteſs, his wife; and if any one ſhould wonder that we were not jealous of each other, ſuffice it to ſay, that I wondered at it myſelf. The Counteſs was to me, at one time, the cauſe of ſo much inquietude, by the correſpondence ſhe had

had with Count Termes, who was, withal, afar off; now, that I saw him so nigh her, even from morning till night, it troubled me no more than if they had been brothers: It was not that I did not love him with as much ardour as at first, or was not equally tenacious of my honour, the virtue of Count Termes was that which made me secure, as he could also be assured of mine; not knowing me even capable of one thought to violate the sacred rights of his love, I believed him therefore incapable to violate mine. We both believed so, but the Countess believed quite contrary, and the respect which her husband shewed to me, though under her own eyes, disturbed her not a little: whether this was a common foible of her nation, or a real mistrust which she had entertained for her husband's virtue, I knew not, but her suspicion was no ways agreeable to me, because at the same time she also must have but an indifferent opinion of my honour. I thought of me she ought to have formed a better judgment, and if she believed me capable of infidelity, I must say that she was capable of it herself, notwithstanding I dissembled my knowledge of it, but could not help smiling

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at her weakneſs ; I believed her inquietude was more the effect of vanity than of love, and that ſhe flattered herſelf that ſhe was the moſt accompliſhed of her ſex ; however, I begged her huſband to keep more upon the reſerve, becauſe a well diſpoſed mind ought never to divert itſelf with the weakneſs of others, or rejoice at the coſt of another's tears.

CHAP. XXXI.

Birth of my firſt Child, and imminent Danger of my Huſband's Life.

OUR innocent diverſions were ſoon interrupted by the manifeſt ſigns of my being with child, and which, becauſe it was the firſt, obliged me to give immediate notice of it to my mother, who, in anſwer, deſired me to repair immediately to Verſailles : the Counteſs departed with her huſband towards Paris, at which I was well pleaſed, leſt ſome new jealouſy might ariſe on our journey. Three days after her I took alſo the ſame road, and the pleaſure with which my mother received me was incredible; but her extream care

care for my ſituation conſtrained me to be ſo reſerved that ſhe would ſcarcely ſuffer me to move myſelf: all the ſatiſfaction that I could take was in reading, with which I was always delighted, becauſe it added to the improvement of of my mind. Books are the beſt converſation that a prudent woman can deſire, to ſpend her time with ſatisfaction to herſelf: from all books ſome advantage may be gathered, but from every man it is impoſſible; the men in general are guided by indirect views, and court our eſteem at the vile expence of a thouſand lies; on recounting the days which I had ſpent in reading, I found none ſpent in vain, but of the others I could form but a very unſatisfactory remembrance. During thoſe months in which I was with child, I had no other occupation but this, becauſe my mother even feared that the air would offend me. During that time nothing conſiderable occurred, but an odd accident happened by which I found out the truth of an affair which I had in vain wiſhed to be acquainted with a long time before: I was one day, as uſual, reading a book of morals which gave me incredible delight, when one of

of my maids preſented herſelf before me, and begged that I would grant her one requeſt, which was to quit my ſervice; ſhe was called Miſs la Gneche, was a little ordinary figure, a great pratler, and very fooliſh, though for pride and vanity ſhe was not to be equalled; and when ſhe found herſelf leſs reſpected than the reſt of her fellow-ſervants, ſhe would ſtamp and tear her hair with vexation: of her perſon I ſhould not have taken any notice, if it had not been in reſpect to my mother who gave her to me, and in whoſe ſervice ſhe had been from her childhood. This ſole reflection induced me to aſk her, what motives ſhe had for her requeſt? or whether ſhe was diſſatisfied with her place? ſhe anſwered me, that ſhe had no complaint to make, but it being now time for her to ſettle herſelf in life, ſhe wanted to embrace the opportunity which preſented itſelf for her to marry. I had before ſome motives to ſuſpect that Gneche muſt have been in love during my ſtay at Lyons, for ſhe was never content, and continually wiſhed to be again at Verſailles, nor were we hardly returned but I obſerved a ſudden gladneſs and joy overſpread her countenance. Out of curio-

ſity

ſity I demanded who was her intended ſpouſe? ſhe bluſhed in telling it, but how was I aſtoniſhed when ſhe mentioned Nimar! I bade her reflect ſeriouſly upon what ſhe was about, and told her, that ſhe was ſeeking her own ruin and deſtruction; that he had neither a capital to live on, nor abilities to get it; that his ſubſiſtance was by cheating, debauchery, and lies. Gneche, blinded with her amorous paſſion, had the courage to anſwer me, that of her lover I was badly informed, for ſhe knew from himſelf, that the Marquis N. N. protected him as his own child, that the Princeſs of —— kept him continually at her table, that the Counteſs N. N. employed him in all her particular affairs, and that he was reſpected by every one. Theſe are things, replied I, which are repeated by perſons of even weaker capacity than himſelf; I do not wonder at your believing it, becauſe your paſſion makes the cheat leſs apparent, but I wonder that the ladies you mentioned give him the liberty to mention their names, and are not aſhamed to keep ſuch a villain near their perſon. At that moment I conceived a ſuſpicion which, conſidering her connection with Nimar, was not unreaſonable,

and

and I resolved to be convinced by surprising her. With all my heart, added I, follow the impulse of your blind love; but you will repent perhaps, before long, at having lost a mistress who already knew of your connection with him, and something of a worse nature; but I never took notice of it, being unwilling to ruin you: you do not think perhaps that I know of that billet lost by me some time ago, which you accidentally found and put into the hands of your unworthy lover, who made use of it for a purpose which cost me so many tears. Here she interrupted me, falling at my feet with tears in her eyes, and acknowledged that my suspicion was just: in confessing it, she tried to excuse herself, by telling me, that she found it in the garden when she was going to speak with Nimar, that she shewed it to him not seeing it directed to me, and that she left it with him not imagining that it could be of any prejudice to me. By this humorous accident I found out a fact which had often put my brains to the torture. Gneche with all my persuasions would not be contented to break with him, and I gave her up to her own misfortune: the advantage I made by this was

greater

greater than the loſs of a naughty ſervant and a domeſtic enemy; nor have we enemies more pernicious than the ſervants in our own families; by them our ſecrets are betrayed, and our actions interpreted as they think proper; our ſubſtance is waſted by their careleſſneſs, and our good name and reputation itſelf are at the mercy of their ſcandalous tongues. The world is ſo extravagant and unwarrantable in its maxims, that to be great it condemns us to be miſerable; and to keep ourſelves in a ſtate to be reſpected, muſt be always in fear of thoſe beneath us.

The time of my delivery being come, I was brought to bed of a beautiful child, at the ſight of which my mother was greatly rejoiced. The concern my huſband was under during the time of my labour, through apprehenſion of my danger, was exceſſive; but his inquietude did not laſt long, becauſe my danger in a few days was over. The concern of my mother for the preſervation of my child was inexpreſſible; I ſhall only ſay, that ſhe conſidered it as the only heir to all her eſtate, and in compariſon with the child ſhe made but little account of myſelf, though ſhe always loved me tenderly: in fact, the

felicity

felicity of my mother hung by a ſingle thread, depending upon the life of a child, ſubject to all diſeaſes of human nature; but her tenderneſs ſerved only to augment her grief from the apprehenſions of loſing it, nor did it ſignify my ſpeaking of this, for ſhe loved it as her own life, and by no means would conſent to let me have it, and I, to be her child, muſt diſpenſe with the pleaſure of being a mother. With theſe ſentiments, ſuperior to the weakneſs of our ſex, it ſeemed that heaven had ordained that I ſhould ſeparate from my dear little boy: he did not die, but it was for ſome time the ſame to me as if he had been really dead. Some days after my delivery, I was walking together with my huſband in a gallery, when a letter was brought from a perſon unknown, and which was given to our ſervant, by a perſon entirely a ſtranger; he had hardly opened it but he was ſeized with a violent ſneezing, and ſwooned away upon a chair. O God! what was my agony at that time, and how many ſuſpicions came confuſedly into my ſoul: the force of the ſneeze made the letter drop from his hands; I ſtamped upon it, and kicked it on one ſide; I called out for aſſiſtance, which

immediately came, and I related to my father the fact, who ordered them not to take any notice at present, but sent immediately for his doctor who soon brought my husband to himself, and having examined the letter found it to be poisoned; nor would my spouse have been longer alive had he not dropt it from his hands, by which accident the poison had not time to operate, and only occasioned that lightness in his head which made him fall upon the chair, where in a little time he recovered his senses: but I could not recover so soon from my perplexity; it was not easy to foretell from whence this blow came, but it plainly proved that Count Termes had some secret enemies, who discovering themselves thus, gave us reason to be upon our guard.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Our Journey from Paris to Milan, where, by a humourous Accident I diſcover my Huſband's Jealouſy.

I Am almoſt at the concluſion of my adventures, but am not at that of my troubles, becauſe I had yet one misfortune to encounter with, which, without doubt, was the greateſt of all: by the force of patience, perſecutions, and tears, I had at length attained to repute myſelf happy in the arms of a ſpouſe to me ſo dear, and who ſettled in me alone all his contentedneſs; notwithſtanding this I did not expect to be always contented, for upon the happineſs of this world I had but little dependence; and in the moſt flattering circumſtances of my fortune, I had always a dread of diſappointment fixed in my heart. With all theſe my maxims, the late danger of my dear ſpouſe was an accident ſo entirely unforeſeen, that it rendered me inconſolable: that letter being examined by ſkilful people, with proper precaution againſt any bad conſequence, contained nothing worth notice, and the character was unknown;

but this diabolical artifice to poiſon the perſon who opened it, was well known to every one that ſaw Count Termes that day in the gallery : we could not be certain from whence it came, but were all of opinion that it muſt be from ſome relation of the Marquis B. C. to revenge his death by baſe treachery. The circumſtances of the people concerned in this plot would not permit us to make it public through fear of irritating them : a prudent diſſimulation contributes greatly to their confuſion and vexation ; for to the envious and malicious, there is not a greater puniſhment than that which accrues to them from their own diſappointed malice : treachery when timely diſcovered, retorts upon the aggreſſors, and inflicts more ſorrow upon the contrivers of it, than it does upon thoſe who ſuffered it without damage. It is enough that it gives us ſome opportunity to diſcover the traitor, or at leaſt puts us upon our guard, though even without knowing him. This was the principal object of my attention ; the life of my huſband was to me a point of too great conſequence when I ſaw it aſſaulted, not to ſtudy all manner of ways to preſerve it : the moſt prudent ſtep for him was to

leave

leave Verſailles, and all France; but I could not divide from him, nor could I think him ſecure except I was always at his ſide. Italy offered us a refuge of ſecurity, our retirement to which might alſo be juſtified by the private intereſt of our family. My mother did not know how to reſolve on this ſorrowful ſeparation; confined to thoſe nice points between her love for me, and my love for Count Termes, ſhe thought herſelf entitled to the preference; I was a daughter before I became a wife, but I was ſtill her daughter though I accompanied my huſband, and the rites of matrimony were no ways inconſiſtent with thoſe of nature. Theſe my reaſons prevailed on my mother, but I was conſtrained to gratify her in one reſpect, which I ſubmitted to with reluctance; that was, to leave with her my ſon, who was then about ſix months old, for ſhe could not bear the thoughts of having it expoſed to the fatigues of a long journey.

This and our departure being agreed to, we left France, and with it the pledges that were moſt dear to me; but I left them willingly to ſecure the life of my huſband, and to enjoy at a diſtance from the noiſe of the court, the

sweet quiet of a private fortune. Our journey could not be very expeditious, as we carried with us a retinue of eight people, who had been for many years in the service of my mother, and well known by her to be faithful in their trusts. Passing by Lyons, Mr. D'Arcore, our beloved friend, insisted on our staying a few days at his house, and entertained us elegantly, as usual. Departing from Lyons we tarried a few days at Turin, where the royal nuptials were at that time celebrated with the greatest magnificence. From Turin we passed to Milan, where Count Termes had obtained some lands which by right were his property. In this city both myself and my husband had many friends, and the kindness which I received from them was more than what I can here express: they strove to out-vie each other in their endeavours to oblige me, and would not suffer a single day to pass away, in which they did not give me some motive to admire the greatness of their souls, and enjoy the effects of their bounty. I do not intend by this to usurp a praise which I have no claim to, by saying that I always knew how to adapt myself to the humour of my acquaintance and of my cir-

circumſtances, but in Milan, where they all were ſo much devoted to my intereſt, I was conſtrained to give my company to each, in order to deal unjuſtly with none. I do not know whether it was my adventures, or my qualifications, which rendered me ſo dear to all; but I know that ſo much kindneſs exceeded my merit, and could not laſt long without being diſturbed by ſome ſorrow. Amongſt all that honoured me and viſited me often, was the Marquis P. S. about the age of two and twenty, and endowed with all thoſe natural accompliſhments which, being united with his noble education, rendered him truly amiable. I muſt own that he behaved to me with more attention than any one of the reſt, but am conſcious that I did not diſtinguiſh him above any of the others, by any particular tokens of civility; but this was ſufficient to caſt my huſband into a ſudden and profound melancholy, of which at firſt I could not underſtand his meaning. Two years had paſſed ſince my nuptials with Count Termes, and I never knew him to be jealous; my conduct in reality did not give him the leaſt reaſon, but I muſt alſo ſay, that myſelf ſuffered that torment thro'

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the jealouſy of my huſband: not that Count Termes kept me reſerved, or with any rigour deprived me of my liberty, obſerved my ſteps, or diſturbed my converſation with any reproaches; he was too wiſe to fall into ſuch a weakneſs, and had too much eſteem for my virtue to diſcredit it in the face of the world with his jealous ſuſpicions. A huſband puts his own honour in doubt when he ſhews too much concern, and every one will take the freedom to put their own conſtructions upon the actions of a married woman, when they ſee the huſband examine and obſerve her with too much attention. The jealouſy of Count Termes was confined within his heart; nothing was to be ſeen by his behaviour but a certain uncommon ſadneſs which prevailed over his natural lively temper, of which I ſhould never have found out the cauſe if my eyes had not been opened by a very humourous accident. Being in the ſummer ſeaſon, I fell aſleep one day after dinner upon a chair, and ſlept ſo ſound that any perſon might have come into my room without my either ſeeing or hearing them; when I awaked, I found upon my bureau, which ſtood cloſe by me, a billet directed to me, but I did

not

not know the hand-writing, though I thought to have ſeen it before; I called my maid to know who had laid it there, or from whence it came; ſhe informed me that ſhe had received it from another of the ſervants: I ordered her to go and enquire who ſent it, becauſe the fact at Verſailles had taught me never to open a billet until I firſt knew from whence it came: ſhe returned, and told me, that it was brought by a ſervant belonging to the Marquis P. S. I then read it, and found it to this tenor:

" Madam,

If this day after dinner, in your going to take the air, you would condeſcend to give yourſelf the trouble to call at the ſign of the Golden Eagle, you will anticipate me the pleaſure of embracing you, for I cannot procure it of myſelf till to-morrow, as I ſhall tell you in perſon. Come without fail, for I ſhall add no more, being willing to ſurpriſe you."

How many confuſed ideas did theſe few lines immediately produce in me! the Marquis P. S. ſent the billet, but I was ſatisfied that it was not wrote by him, becauſe I knew his character, and

that

that he was too wiſe and prudent to write to me with ſuch liberty, which he was never entitled to by our friendſhip. The billet ſeemed to be wrote by a woman, and I could have ſworn that the hand-writing was not new to me, but could not recollect whoſe it was, nor would I riſk the aſking any one to ſatisfy my curioſity, or ſee where this adventure was to finiſh. I ſaid nothing to my huſband, but ordered my coach to be got ready, and I went firſt to pay a ſhort viſit to Lady N. N. and from thence to the place of appointment abovementioned: it was near ſix o'clock when I entered my coach, and about ſeven I ſtopped at the place of aſſignation to enquire if any one was there that deſired to ſee me? but what was my ſurprize when my huſband appeared before me, with an air more penſive than uſual! to ſee him at that hour, in that place, and with that diſdain! I then recollected my having left the billet on the bureau, open to peruſal of any one who had the curioſity to read it, and inſtantly gueſſed how it was; nor could I eaſily refrain from laughing, becauſe the comical circumſtances of this accident appeared to me like part of a comedy. What

do

do you do here? ſaid I, in a joke, we do not want your company. The Marquis P. S. replied he, is not yet come; when he arrives, I ſhall leave you at your liberty. This anſwer would have offended me, had it come from any other perſon, but his confuſion made me ample amends: however, his jealouſy did not laſt long, for in a few moments after I was ſurpriſed with the preſence of the Counteſs N. N. of Pavia, and the Marquis her huſband: Count Termes at that ſight remained like a pillar, and one look from me at once reproached and chaſtiſed him: I then turned myſelf to the Counteſs to return her thanks for the joke ſhe had played me, and gave her at the ſame time the moſt tender ſentiments of my gratitude.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

My Journey to Venice, and the comical Adventure which happened with my old Friend Mr. N. N.

THE Counteſs had travelled from Paris to Milan that ſame morning, and not being able to appear in publick, becauſe their equipage remained on the road ſome miles behind, ſhe could not reſiſt her impatient curioſity of ſeeing me; being told at that lodging that I was in this city, ſhe reſolved to ſurprize me by ſending that billet without a name; and the Marquis P. S. being to viſit her, a few hours after her arrival, ſhe gave it to him that it might be conducted ſafe into my hands.

Thus was all the cauſe of Count Termes' jealouſy and ſadneſs diſcovered; the billet was wrote by the Counteſs, but I did not recollect her writing, tho' ſtill I thought to have known it, but I wonder how the Count did not know it, when he found it on my bureau, read it, and examined it at his pleaſure; he having courted her for ſome time, ought to have had ſome better

ter knowledge of her hand. He ſwore to me afterwards, that it even did not once enter his thoughts; and having heard from my maid, it was brought by one of the Marquis P. S.'s ſervants, he believed it without the leaſt doubt to be his: This accident opened my eyes, to ſee that Count Termes had no good opinion of my friendſhip with the Marquis P. S. and that from this perhaps his uncommon melancholy aroſe. The reſpect which he had for me detained him from explaining it better; but ſtill he retained the worm in his heart; and I muſt not only excuſe him as a man, but be careful likewiſe to make him ſincere as a huſband. If the men act wrong in being jealous, the women do worſe in trying to cure them by violent remedies; in theſe caſes we ought to act with our huſbands as we do with children that are difficult to pleaſe, by giving them more at one time than what they aſk, that they may be quiet the longer. With Count Termes, to cure him of his jealouſy of one only, I withdrew from the company of all; and to eſtabliſh his, and my own quiet, I deſired that we might leave Milan, and retire to my Marquiſate of V——, in the kingdom of Naples, intending firſt to

make a ſhort ſtay at Venice and at Rome, where there were ſome friends whom I deſired to ſee, perhaps for the laſt time. My reſolution was diſapproved by all the nobility of Milan; but I preferred domeſtic quiet to all the kindneſs I could receive otherways; and if Count Termes was careful not to give the leaſt torment to my amorous heart, he juſtly merited not to have the leaſt diſcontent upon my account. When I began my journey from Milan to Venice, I had been ſix months with child: If my mother had been preſent, or had known of my reſolution before I put it in effect, ſhe would have uſed all her endeavours to have fruſtrated it, from the fear that ſuch a journey, in my condition, might cauſe my death. I don't pretend to have acted with an unbecoming boldneſs, as many women imprudently do at that time; neither did I act with that affected nicety which renders every motion a torment. My ſecond delivery, however, was happier than the firſt, and whatſoever miſchances my mother forwarned me of in her letters, ſhe had not the diſpleaſure of hearing, ſince my departure from Paris, even of my being in the leaſt indiſpoſed. At my

firſt entrance into Venice I thought to acquaint Mr. N. N. of our arrival, but a thought occurred to my mind, to ſee the tranſport of his tenderneſs, by ſurprizing him unawares. It being the ſeaſon of autumn, I procured a maſquerade-dreſs, according to the cuſtom of the country, that I might not be diſtinguiſhed by the particularity of my cloaths, and went out in company with my huſband to look for him: I knew where he lived, but wanted to give him a meeting out of his own houſe; his perſon I knew well, even when maſked, but his face was generally uncovered. I ſearched all the public places, and at laſt ſaw him in a coffee-houſe upon the grand parade, and in which there was but little company. Having informed my huſband of the manner in which he was to behave, I walked twice or thrice before the door, and then went in and ſat cloſe by him; who had already obſerved me, and ſeemed to be pleaſed at my being nigh him; he looked at me from head to foot, but did not ſeem to know me. I looked and laughed at him with ſo much familiarity, that he at laſt aſked of me if I had any commands with him; I anſwered him ſoftly, that he might not diſcover

me by my voice, to ſtep on one ſide, and he ſhould know. Maſquerader, replied he, my time is paſt; here are others to whom you may apply, and with whom you may make a better market. With ſigns, I anſwered him, no, and that I would have him only: He added, that if I would take a diſh of chocolate, or coffee, at his coſt, and would ſpare him the trouble of moving, I ſhould be welcome. I replied, that I deſired to be with him alone, and getting up from my ſeat, took him by the hand, and dragged him almoſt by force out of the houſe, obliging him to follow me: Why, good woman, ſaid he to me, you want to make me grow young again, whether I am willing or no; let me at leaſt ſee your face, and then we will talk about it. When you have ſeen me, added I, you'll not have the heart to leave me: I then conducted him to another coffee-houſe on the ſame parade, over which there were ſome rooms where we had been often together, when I firſt became acquainted with him. We had no ſooner got there, but he ordered ſome chocolate, and then deſired me, as no other perſon was preſent, to ſhew him my face; the words were hardly uttered, but in

came

came my huſband, who had not loſt ſight of me the whole time, and in a haſty manner began to quarrel with Mr. N. N. that he had ſeduced his wife, and wanted to diſhonour him: our friend excuſed himſelf, by ſaying that it was I that ſeduced him, and began to ſuſpect that it was a contrivance between us for ſome wicked deſign: At laſt, when their words grew hot with each other, I called them both fools, and running between them, at the ſame time taking off my maſque, their quarrel was converted into a fit of laughter. Mr. N. N. who had not the leaſt thoughts of ſeeing me at Venice, ſtarted back with ſurprize: This ſudden joy carried him almoſt beyond himſelf; he embraced and ſqueezed me to his boſom, and embraced my huſband over and over again; and confuſed with the ſudden ſurprize, he could only repeat firſt to me, and then to the Count, for why, or how could you be ſo cruel, as not to give me timely notice? Certainly I muſt have been ſtupid, not to have known either of your voices. The good old gentleman being recovered from his ſurprize, we related to him a few particulars, and he was ſo rejoiced at this viſit, that he knew not how to give

us ſufficient proofs of his tenderneſs: We went directly to lodge at his houſe, and to ſatisfy his curioſity, I related to him what was become of Albevit, what ſervice I did to Roſaura, and what became of her, for he knew not one article of what had happened, until I had informed him. During our ſtay at Venice, he was continually inventing freſh methods to pleaſe us, and ſpared no coſt to entertain and divert us: he deſired that we would ſtay with him till the carnival, but my time advanced apace, and my mother believed, perhaps, that at that hour I was in the kingdom of Naples. I was therefore conſtrained to ſeperate from ſo dear a friend, to prevent my being ſurprized in Venice with the trouble of a delivery.

After tarrying there a whole month, we ſet out for Rome, having acquainted Madam Gallanti, by a letter from me, that ſhe might prepare a lodging for us in her own houſe: The good woman received me as if ſhe had ſeen in me her own child, and ſo ſhe ſaid ſhe might call me, having aſſiſted at my birth, and having educated me in my tender years; her huſband, no longer Duli, but Mr. Gallanti, was not at home upon our arrival, and when he re-

returned, he fell at my feet, bleſſing me for his good fortune, and for reſtoring from death to life his numerous family. After his return to Rome, he ſettled his affairs in ſuch a manner, that he made a tolerable figure. The firſt moment I ſaw him, I obſerved upon his finger a ring of ſome value, and which I thought to have ſome knowledge of, and deſiring to look at it, which he readily granted, I found it to be one of mine, ſtolen, with the reſt of the things, by the ſervant at Turin. I enquired where he had got it, and gave him my reaſon for aſking ſuch a queſtion; he told me that he had bought the ring for one hundred ducats, and from a man who was ſtill in Rome, and gave himſelf the air of a man of character; but was reduced from his ſplendor, and, for mere want, hired himſelf as a ſervant to the Abbot N. N. his friend, and well known by all Rome. With this, and ſome other tokens, I made no doubt but it muſt be that unworthy villain my ſervant, who plundered my lodging one night at Turin; however, I could not expect any of my things from him now, but I was willing that ſuch a thief ſhould not go unpuniſhed, leaſt he might ſerve others in the

the same manner: Equity and reason demanded of me to give notice to his new master, who having the enemy in his house, might unexpectedly meet with some misfortune. Any other person would not perhaps have made this reflection for me, but the example of others never served me for a rule; and it was enough when I had acted rightly, though I even had acted contrary to the opinion of all others.

CHAP. XXXIV.

In Rome I find the Servant who plundered me at Turin; and this Discovery procures me a Friend who was dear to me ever after.

NOT to make a wrong step on this occasion, I must first be certain, whether the servant of the Abbot N. N. was him that had robbed me at Turin, and this none could decide but myself. We agreed between us, that my landlord, being a friend of the Abbot's, should discover to him our suspicion, that he might procure me a sight of his servant. In a few days the Abbot paid me a visit; I found him to be a man of a middle age, and of noble

and

and obliging behaviour; nor was he with me half an hour, before, by his way of thinking and diſcourſe, I knew him to be a real philoſopher, cut within a hair's breath of my own meaſure. Our firſt ſubject of diſcourſe was about his ſervant, who he told me would come there to light him home in the evening, at which time I ſhould have an opportunity of ſeeing him: When he came, we had notice, and I ſtood behind the curtain of the anti-chamber door, and having a full view of him in the hall, found him to be the ſame as I ſuſpected: The Abbot, who had taken his right meaſures, deſired to write a few lines, and when the billet was wrote, he delivered it to his ſervant, who little ſuſpected what it meant, ordering him to carry it where it was directed. This billet was an order for him to be arreſted; on the delivery of it, the villain was ſeized by the collar, and paſſed immediately into priſon, from whence he was ſent to the galleys, there to enjoy the fruits of his wretched conduct. The Abbot, in the while, not without reaſon, proteſted, that to me he was indebted for his life. What thing more likely, than a favourable opportunity offering, that villain, in the

the night, might not only rob the houſe, but deprive his maſter of his life. His viſit was not very long; yet by his diſcourſe, I entertained a high opinion for his perſon, finding him to be a man of good morals: Having aſked my permiſſion to return now and then to ſee me, to give me a better teſtimony of his gratitude, my huſband agreed to it willingly, and begged that he would not fail to come, and that his company was a particular pleaſure to us both. I did not preſs him ſo much as the Count, becauſe the affair at Milan ſerved me ever after for a rule; nevertheleſs my huſband did not fail gently to reproach me for being ſo reſerved. The agreeableneſs of the Abbot had poſſeſſed his fancy ſo much that he was not content unleſs he ſaw him every day, and at laſt could not move a ſtep without him. To this perſon, really worthy of our eſteem, for his birth, education and qualities, we beſtowed all our company, becauſe, for the public diverſions I never had any taſte, my fancy being always for ſolitude.

The laſt months of my bearing, by reaſon of ſome indiſpoſition which came over me, turned out a little troubleſome. My mother, to whom I had given

given ſome notice, wrote me, that if I remembered her misfortune, I ſhould not think of leaving Rome until I was delivered. United with her commands, I had the perſuaſions of Duli and his wife, the Abbot, and my huſband, therefore it was reſolved that in that ſame houſe I ſhould be delivered; and in the very houſe in which I was born myſelf, at the end of little leſs than two months, I brought to the world a girl, who, this moment, while I am mentioning her birth, is playing round me, and the more I look at her, the more I think ſhe reſembles her mother. During the laſt month of my time, and ſome days after, I led a life quite ſolitary from all, but not diſagreeable, becauſe either my huſband or the Abbot kept me company. Between two ſouls which act by the ſame principle, there can be no diſagreement: The tenderneſs my huſband had for him, rendered him dearer to me, than even his own admirable qualities: He at laſt became confidant to us both, nor have I, this moment in which I write, any motives to repent that confidence. His fortune was ſuch as generally does, or ought to belong to people of merit, that is, middling, and principally found-

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ed on the abilities and the extenſiveneſs of their talents. The Abbot, my friend, had once ſerved a Prince in quality of Secretary, but had left him for ſome time paſt becauſe he could not any longer continue to his ſatisfaction : the thing was apparent, and did but little honour to his maſter, who, to avoid the imputation of the fault, contrived a method to throw it upon the innocent. The Abbot fully informed us of his difference with the Prince, againſt whom all Rome gave their opinion ; but facts of that ſort, in me confided, I have no right to publiſh in theſe Memoirs.

One day, being ſtill in bed indiſpoſed by my lying-in, he came to me with more haſte than uſual, and with ſuch a melancholy look, that I aſked him, what was the matter? Madam, anſwered he, the honour of your friendſhip made me too happy ; whoever on this earth is poſſeſſed with ſentiments of virtue, cannot poſſeſs any durable felicity : I am in the neceſſity of leaving you, and the loſs which I muſt ſuſtain in being deprived of your preſence, is the only thing which renders me ſenſible of my preſent misfortune : I have heard for certain, that the Prince N. N. has

has ſchemed ſuch a plot againſt me, that I am in danger not only of loſing my good name, but alſo my liberty: I ought not, nor will not give him the pleaſure of revenging himſelf; and as the time will allow it, I will render his artifices in vain by my departure from Rome, leſt worſe might happen. The news ſurpriſed and grieved me, my huſband alſo was greatly concerned to loſe ſuch an agreeable companion, who gave us every day ſo many proofs of his ſincerity; his condition ſeemed to us ſo deplorable, that we were enraged to the higheſt degree to ſee innocence, virtue, and reaſon oppreſſed, and unable to obtain ſatisfaction or juſtice; we could offer him a refuge at our eſtate in the kingdom of Naples, where we intended to retire ourſelves likewiſe in a few days; but my huſband, beſides that, wanted to vindicate his good name, and not let the contrivers of the barbarous crime have the pleaſure of making him be believed guilty. After thinking a good while on it, an excellent thought came into his head; he went directly to the French Ambaſſador, his particular friend, and an old acquaintance of my father: he related to him the whole fact, who finding the abbot worthy of

compaſſion, gave him his protection, and refuge in his own palace, the effect of which fully anſwered our deſires; for truth and virtue generally triumphs over its enemies, and we had the glory a ſecond time to aſſiſt a man who had, with his virtue, rendered himſelf worthy of our concern. If ever I was pleaſed at doing a kind action for any perſon in the world, this was the time; becauſe thereby I gained the heart of a man who continues ſtill to be with me and behaves like a real friend, and who in my favour would ſacrifice his life. He could not open his mouth without beſeeching us to give him liberty to ſhew his gratitude, and continually begged, under the title of a favour, leave to follow us wherever we went, proteſting that he wanted nothing of us but our friendſhip, having wherewithal to ſubſiſt himſelf. Such generous offers were inducements ſufficient to lay both my own heart, and that of my huſband, under the neceſſity of not refuſing them. The company of a perſon of his character ſeemed to us a fortune which few can meet with, for few of his character are to be found in the world; we were convinced that we poſſeſſed in him a friend,

who,

who, wherever we went, would be an honour to us; and as he wanted to unite his fortune to ours, the offer was willingly accepted; and departing from Rome about four months after, we three, and the reſt of my family, ſafely arrived at the caſtle of V— in the kingdom of Naples, where the parents of my mother had made for many years their reſidence.

CHAP. XXXV.

Deſcription of the Caſtle of my Juriſdiction, and what happened to me there.

THE antient caſtle of V— juriſdiction was ramparted all round, and on the rampart ſtood ſeveral ſmall turrets, part antient and part modern: the inhabitants were in number about two thouſand, moſt of them perſons of credit and well ſettled: being a place convenient for ſhipping, it commanded a large trade: its ſituation was facing the ſea; part of it ſtood cloſe to the ſea-ſide, and the reſt went ſlanting to the top of a hill, on which ſtood the palace of my anceſtors: it was ſurrounded with ſome ſpacious gardens, and from that hill we could ſee all that was de-

lightful of the earth and ſea; nor could I have found a ſeat more ſuitable to my fancy, becauſe, without being utterly retired from the world, I had all the pleaſure of a quiet and noble ſolitude.

The ſteward of my lands had notice from Paris of my coming there: being accuſtomed for many years to govern as maſter, and not give an account of his adminiſtration to any one but my mother, who was ſo far off, I don't know whether he deſired my arrival, but I found no reaſon to be diſſatisfied with his accounts. All the inhabitants, whom I might call my ſubjects, treated me with the greateſt reſpect, and ſeemed rejoiced at my landing. The firſt who came to meet me ſome miles out of the eſtate, was the intendant beforementioned; he was a man of luſty ſtature, and ſavage diſpoſition; one who had a great conceit of his own abilities, was much addicted to drinking, and uſurped an air of importance, and thought every word he ſpoke an oracle. I paſſed, amidſt the benedictions and praiſes of that little populace, to my palace, which I found to be built with good architecture, but was furniſhed with goods which bore the face of antiquity: this was the point which I moſt diſliked,

liked, not seeing that neatness which is admired in France; but my indulgent mother had even thought in Paris of the things that would be most agreeable to me, for in a short time a vessel arrived loaded with all kinds of modern goods, with several pieces of tapestry, with which I adorned my palace in a manner suitable to my taste. If I tire the patience of my readers in relating these trivial circumstances, I flatter myself that there is no person so unkind as to reproach me for it, considering that I had fixed upon that place to end the remainder of my days. In this castle I lived quiet and happy, because separate from the tumults of the world; yet I wanted for nothing which might render my life delightful. My conversation was reduced to a few persons, of whom my husband and the Abbot N. N. had the largest share: the steward diverted me a little with his humorous character, but his great inclination for drinking made me generally dislike him, sobriety being dictated to us by the right of reason; but if all the vices of his person had been reduced to his love of drinking, I should not have thought myself obliged to think much about him.

I was walking one day round the caſtle, in company with my huſband and the Abbot, when a beautiful girl threw herſelf at my feet: her age was about fourteen, of a graceful ſhape and ſprightly genius, and I thought at firſt ſight that there was ſomething in her more than common: with the tears in her eyes ſhe demanded juſtice; I raiſed her up from the ground, then asked her, in what ſhe was aggrieved? Let them be who they will, Madam, anſwered ſhe, I can no longer conceal it, becauſe I am reduced to deſpair; my proſecutor is your ſteward, who, after having attempted in vain all laſt year upon my honour, has finally contrived a method by which he hopes to be able to reduce me to the neceſſity of ſatisfying his brutiſh deſire: he has ſeized upon a poſſeſſion adjoining to yours, which was the only maintainance of our honoured family, under the falſe pretence that it appertained antiently to the Ducheſs, your mother: he has uſurped it from us by acting as witneſs, advocate, and judge, and has reduced us to a ſtarving condition: I perſuade myſelf that you, nor the Ducheſs your mother, have any hand in this cruel uſage: the oppreſſing of poor people cannot

cannot enrich or be a glory to perſons of your character; that unworthy wretch enjoys himſelf the fruits of our land, and cloaks it with your name that he may enjoy it without being puniſhed: in proof that what I ſay is true, you muſt know, Madam, that he has offered to reſtore it to me more than once, at the dear price of my honour; heaven is witneſs that ſuch a thing never entered my mind: in the ſhort time of one twelvemonth I have been driven to ſuch neceſſity that I have not enough remaining to cover myſelf decently, or buy the common neceſſaries of life for me or my poor mother; nevertheleſs I will rather periſh through want, than live with diſhonour: and, Madam, if you do not render me juſtice, I will ſtab that villain with my own hand, before he ſhall triumph over my honour. Here ſhe again burſt into a flood of tears, and would have fallen at my feet a ſecond time, but I prevented it, and with kind words endeavoured to comfort her. In her ſentiments I thought I obſerved a likeneſs to thoſe of my own heart, and even if the poſſeſſion did not belong to her by right, I ought not to refuſe her my help. When ſhe had acquainted me of the

the ground which ſhe had laid claim to, I gave her three piſtoles to ſupply her preſent neceſſities, and adviſed her not to mention a word to any one of what ſhe had ſaid to me.

As ſoon as I returned home, I ſent for the ſteward, and demanded an account of the lands, without ſhewing to him my knowledge of Roſalina's poſſeſſion, for that was the name of the girl abovementioned; but that unworthy wretch had notice of her ſpeaking to me, and brought in his pocket-book a writing, by which he would have perſuaded me, that that poſſeſſion belonged, by antient right, to my mother, and by uniting it to the reſt of the lands, thought to have given me an authentic proof of his care and fideliy.

To convince me of ſuch a truth that writing was not ſufficient, from which I could only diſcover that one of my anceſtors had purchaſed ſome lands, of which that was part; but it might have been ſold, or given away after that. To prove my ſteward unjuſt, I muſt neceſſarily have had ſome writing from Roſalina, which might clear up her right to poſſeſs it. When ſhe came to me the next day, I demanded if ſhe had

had any ſuch deeds? and ſhe candidly confeſſed that ſhe could not produce one paper to juſtify her pretenſions; ſhe proteſted that her father inherited it from his great-grandfather, and that my grandfather was then living and had never made the leaſt objection to it, and that every one in the place could witneſs for truth all that ſhe had ſaid. The caſe was of a very intricate nature; though I could have decided the matter at once, by reſtoring to Roſalina her lands. Her honeſt ſimplicity at my tribunal merited a greater recompence, but I wanted to ſee the thing thoroughly cleared up, not to prejudice my own family or the rights of others: this curioſity led me to diſcover a ſecret, which without this accident I ſhould never have found out.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Suſpicions produced from ſome Words of a Manuſcript, which make me deſirous of knowing further.

IF our ſteward had acted right with reſpect to the lands, his conduct with Roſalina had rendered him worthy of puniſhment. One vice often ſerves as a light to diſcover others by, and examining things by degrees, I found him guilty of a hundred other crimes of infidelity and extortions; I knew that with his ſalary, by good management and proper application to the ſervices of his truſt, he might be able to live creditably, but his income could not ſupport any extraordinary grandeur; yet his houſe was better furniſhed than mine, his table better ſupplied, and his wife was puffed up with ſo much vanity that ſhe dreſſed richer than myſelf; his ſalary I knew was not equal to his expences, though it was ſufficient to maintain him and his family genteelly without having the leaſt occaſion to commit a breach of truſt. Finding him guilty of ſo much villany, and hearing the complaints of my tenants

nants againſt him, not willing to impoveriſh my own family to enrich a ſtranger's, I diſcharged him from my ſervice; and this action gained me more than ever the love of every one. In the mean time poor Roſalina intreated me to decide her pretenſions, and tho' I was not yet convinced that the land in queſtion was hers, yet I was perſuaded that ſhe merited my aſſiſtance: I enquired what her land might render her yearly before it was ſeized, and being told about ſix hundred ducats, I aſſigned her a penſion of fifty ducats a month; with this ſhe was ſo well ſatisfied, that ſhe watched every opportunity of meeting me, to bleſs me and kiſs my hand. Her obliging attention made me take ſo much delight in her, that I would willingly have taken her into my own houſe, and ſhe would have come with as much pleaſure, if the age and weakneſs of her mother had not conſtrained her to tarry with her. Excluſive of her genteel manners, her features made an impreſſion upon my heart as if ſhe had been in ſome ſhape related to me: being deſirous of doing her all the good in my power, I reſolved to examine whether the ground in queſtion was really

really her property, and by what right it came to be hers.

The records of my family were ſtill preſerved in the caſtle, but to peruſe ſuch a number of writings required ſomething more than the patience and abilities of a woman; the Abbot ſeeing me deſirous to clear up this doubt, offered to undergo that fatigue, and immediately ſet about it.

Amongſt the papers he found nothing that could clear our doubt, moſt part of them being of no ſignification, and if there had not happened a ſtrange accident I ſhould have remained ſtill in the ſame uncertainty. My huſband was gone to Naples about ſome domeſtic affairs, and I was diſcourſing as uſual, with the Abbot about human diſorders, and philoſophiſing on the variations of time and circumſtances: Madam, ſaid he, on examining your papers, I met with a journal manuſcript of the expences made at various times by your anceſtors, in the courſe of a hundred years paſt: I have noted about twenty different ways by which in ſpending their money they did themſelves honour in the world; that is to ſay, twenty alterations, according to the

the idea they formed of human greatneſs. About an hundred years ago one of your anceſtors carried on ſome buildings merely with the intent that the poor, by working, might obtain a livelihood; and expended, in this manner, ſix thouſand ducats. Another, in his time, baniſhed from his lands all the poor people that had not wherewithal to live; and if they were deſirous to remain, he obliged them to work at this building for half price, and with this art ſaved, at the expence of their labours, upwards of ten thouſand ducats. The great-grandfather of your mother, if I am not miſtaken, gloried in keeping open-houſe to all perſons of learning, that had fled from the perſecutions of fortune, and taken refuge upon his lands; and thirty years after, his ſon ſuffered his own tutor to periſh with hunger, and kept open-houſe to all mountebanks, buffoons, quacks, and ſuch ſort of people in the whole province, and gloried in the company of theſe ignorant impoſtors. Amongſt other things, I have obſerved a great contrariety in the magnificence in matrimonial affairs; at one time the fortune of the woman who married into your family was depoſited, and not

to be meddled with even in the greateſt extremity: ſome time after, the expence allowed for nuptials was marked in the journal, and abbreviated in this manner:

" On occaſion of my maſter's nup-
" tials, expended in the whole, thirty
" thouſand ducats."

In the times nigher to us, I read in the journals of more money being laid out by your grandfather for one habit, than by his grandfather for twenty: in ſhort, Madam, ſo many different men, ſo many different opinions; and which are ſo many undeniable proofs, that human reaſon is a mere ſhadow.

Theſe reflections of the Abbot N. N. being very diverting, made me deſirous of looking more narrowly into that journal, and paſſing over from page to page, we by chance caſt our eyes on the date of April, fifty years paſt, and found theſe words written:

" To Fabrizio, for the cloſet in the
" little palace of the vineyard, by or-
" der of maſter, ſeventeen ducats."

At

At the word closet, the Abbot made a pause, and asked me, if I did not think that word merited some particular attention? he being well versed in history, recollected that in those days the whole kingdom of Naples was embroiled in civil discords, and people of any wealth generally hid their riches underground, and in private holes; that one of my ancestors having procured this closet to be made at that time, had undoubtedly hid some treasure in it; besides, seeing no appearance of any such place in the little palace, made his suspicions still the more plausible, and he insisted that with a little diligence it would not be difficult to find out this secret place. I did not flatter myself with finding a treasure in this place, yet the words of the journal had some private meaning, which excited my curiosity to such a degree, that I was resolved, at all events, to search for it. Count Termes being returned from Naples, we communicated to him our suspicions, and my thought; he tried all possible means to disuade me from it, as if he had been foretold of what was to happen; but his persuasions did not avail, nor would I be content until I found out the truth: therefore he and

the Abbot acted as architects, two country masons, sworn to keep the secret, went to work, and I stood looking on. The little palace of the vineyard was a strong building, formerly the residence of my ancestors, but at this time was made but little use of; every foot of the floor was struck with a large sledge hammer, in order to discover, by the sound, in what place this closet stood: after a long search, by striking one of the middle rooms, we heard a hollow sound come from the thick part of the wall, and on striking the second time, it echoed louder than at first: my husband till then had been continually joking us, but at that noise he changed his tone and began to entertain some hope: the Abbot gloried in the truth of his conjectures, and prided himself on the prerogatives of an antiquarian. In the mean while the wall continued tumbling down, till at last we espied some thick planks, which we found to be the entrance of the closet: the joy which this sight gave us I cannot express, but we were almost out of our senses at the discovery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

A Diſcovery made by me, which ſhews, in its true Light, the true Race from which I was deſcended.

IF any miſer ſhould read my adventures, I dare ſay, at my diſcovery of this cloſet, he will not only devour with his eyes, and heart, the immenſe treaſure he ſuppoſes me to have found in that place, but perhaps will reſolve to pull down his own houſe; but I would adviſe no one to flatter himſelf with theſe fanciful though pleaſing ideas: our treaſure conſiſts in the endowments of our mind, and on theſe our fortune ought to depend: if I had thought otherwiſe, I ſhould have been in that caſe the moſt miſerable woman in the world; but as I deſired nothing more than what I poſſeſſed, my ſoul was no ways diſconcerted at finding in that cloſet, ſearched with ſo much attention, nothing but a vaſt heap of old writings, which, at the weight of paper, were not worth ten ducats. But the Abbot was as much rejoiced as if he really had found a treaſure, on ſeeing, amongſt thoſe papers, ſome old

manuſcripts of an antient writing, bound in parchment: he flattered himſelf, that he ſhould be able to collect ſome inſtructions therefrom which might do him honour in being publiſhed, and carried with him the greateſt part to his apartment, where he immediately ſhut himſelf in to examine them. For my part, I thought but little about them; I ſuppoſed them to belong to my anceſtors, but did not believe they were of ſo much importance as to be ſhut up with ſo much regard: it was happy for me, that on human affairs I had but little dependence, otherwiſe at this time I ſhould have grown deſperate. But few days had paſſed when out of curioſity I asked the Abbot, what diſcovery he had made from the old writings? At this queſtion he firſt gave a ſigh which came from his very heart, and then began to reaſon with me as follows:

Too great, Madam, is the diſcovery which I made in thoſe books: call to your ſuccour all your ſpirit and virtue, for you will have the greateſt need of it if I muſt talk to you as a friend, and not ſubmit to be a vile flatterer, at the expence of betraying reaſon, juſtice, and truth: prepare yourſelf for a

blow,

blow, that would not come ſo freely but from the hands of a philoſopher like myſelf: To poor Roſalina not only belongs, by lawful right, that ground which ſhe deſired, but likewiſe all the lands which you here poſſeſs: have courage, Madam, I have not told you all; and from thoſe papers, buried with ſuch induſtrious malice by your anceſtors, I have diſcovered, for certain, ſtill more; Roſalina is not only lawful miſtreſs of what you poſſeſs, but is beſides your relation: ſhe by a right line deſcends from your forefathers, and you from the ſame only deſcend by a baſtard-line, unjuſtly made lawful a hundred years paſt by virtue of the moſt execrable exceſſes.

If this wonderful news had not made me tremble from head to foot, I muſt have been utterly inſenſible: if my ſurprize was great, my curioſity was ſtill greater to know minutely the truth of this fact; that he might not conceal from me one article, I was miſtreſs enough of myſelf to diſſemble all the inward movements of my ſoul, and give him courage to tell me the remainder. Amongſt the papers, proceeded he, found in the cloſet, do you know, Madam, that I found a manuſcript of

about

about one hundred leaves, in which, from the firſt of its original, is given the hiſtory of your family: you can look yourſelf at the antiquity of it, and its proceedings, when you are diſpoſed for reading. It mentions, that the houſe of the Prince of * * * * was reduced to two ſons: the elder, who enjoyed with the title of Prince this caſtle, had a wife and children; the youngeſt had a ſmall portion of lands aſſigned him for his maintainance, amongſt which was that which Roſalina enjoyed, and which was enjoyed for many years by her anceſtors: he harboured an affection for a woman of bad character, and who, inaſmuch as ſhe was handſome, was equally wretched and proud, and would not be content with enjoying the young Prince's affections, unleſs ſhe could alſo uſurp his perſon, tho' by the vileſt method imaginable: ſhe flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould be able to make him eſpouſe her, by reſiſting his amorous deſires; and his paſſion would have dragged him wherever ſhe liked, had not his elder brother foreſeen the ſnare and by force ſhut her up in a cloiſter a few miles off: the perfidious woman, irritated more by the affront than by her

love,

love, swore to be revenged, and used her art so well, that she seduced her lover to act against the rights of nature, and with poison made him secretly murder his brother, wife, and eldest children: the young child being at nurse out of the castle, escaped that melancholy death, by the nurse pretending that he was dead: the villain then remaining sole heir to the estate, had not the least shame in espousing his wicked counsellor. By her he had no children; but his unworthy wife, predominated by ambition, and rash with desire of seeing entailed upon her descendants all that principality, prevailed over the foolish blindness of her husband, to satisfy her will at the cost of her honour; being inclined to treachery by nature, and vile by birth, in the heat of her passion she fixed her eyes upon one of her domestics, who she thought would be the readiest to execute her infamous desire: these unlawful proceedings continued a long while unnoticed by her husband, and made her mother of a child which he caressed as his own, though all the people in the castle knew to the contrary. In the while, afar off, grew up the lawful heir of this principality, who, meeting

meeting with upright and honeſt people, who were conſcious of his juſt rights, opened the eyes of his uncle to the diſhoneſt conduct of his unworthy conſort; he ſtrove to remedy it, but the juſtice of Providence prevented it, by leading him to the ſtep to which he had conducted his innocent brother, whoſe blood called to heaven for vengeance; he was over-powered by his wicked wife, and miſerably periſhed by her hand. Things did not change face; the perfidious woman, with the abominable price of her diſhonour, made ſuch intereſt at the court of Naples to diſinherit the lawful heir to the eſtate, that ſhe made it believed that he was a baſtard, and to authenticate the ſucceſſion of her ſon, made him appear lawful: From this, Madam, you deſcend by a right line, and from the other, by a right line, deſcends poor Roſalina; and from that time, under the title of a gift, her anceſtors got that land, which ſhe the other day deſired, for their mantainance and ſupport.

The truth of theſe manuſcripts cannot be doubted; for by the ſame it appears that they were wrote by the lawful heir, who eſcaped the fury of his uncle;

uncle; and by other papers I am informed, that they were preſerved by Roſalina's anceſtors, with as much care as if they had been gold, but were taken from them by force, by the uſurpers of their rights, and maliciouſly buried in that ſecret place, that the remembrance of them might be forgot. Here the Abbot ceaſed, and I began to reflect on what I ſhould reſolve, to act properly, and not to do an injury to myſelf; none knew of this ſecret but ourſelves, and by burning the writings, it might die with us, and be buried for ever: but though the thing would be concealed from the eyes of the world, could I for this have acquitted myſelf to my own conſcience? The guilt of a bad action is not to be determined by the opinion of men, but by its contrariety to the dictates of reaſon and equity, and whoever poſſeſſes unlawfully the right of others, is no better than an uſurper; nor can it juſtly be called our own, when we hold it to the prejudice of another. Between me and Roſalina there was a conſiderable diſtance; but this did not juſtify a ſeizure in me, nor diminiſh in her the rights of her pretenſions: my Marquiſate belonged to her by right, and if I had not diſcovered

vered to her the whole affair, I ſhould never have enjoyed it with ſatisfaction: To loſe a poſſeſſion, which I may ſay, was the half of my eſtate, was not a blow half ſo terrible to my generous heart, as to conſider from what diſhonourable anceſtors my preſent grandeur deſcended; this was a reflection which troubled me more than all the reſt; but neither of theſe things ought to have given me any concern, becauſe, in making me leſs proud, it taught me more wiſdom.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

My Reſignation of the Marquiſate of V—— to Roſalina, and her generous Refuſal thereof.

AMongſt all the benefits of fortune I had not one but what was purchaſed by my virtuous conduct, except that of being born great; howſoever, that came to me, as it does to others, by lot. My birth, at one time, gave me ſome uneaſineſs, becauſe I thought the circumſtances in which I was brought to light were but little glorious; now, ſeeing the original of my mother, and others of my anceſtors, were

were no more honourable than mine, I laughed at myſelf for having thought ſo much about it; the actions, ſaid I to myſelf, is what ennobles a perſon, and not the ſplendor of their birth: Fortune, by making me know that I am not lawful heir to this eſtate, pretends perhaps to vilify me, but I, in ſpite of fortune, will here take the opportunity of making myſelf ſo great to my poſterity, that it ſhall ſeem incredible. With theſe reſolutions in my heart, after communicating my intentions to my huſband, I ſent for Roſalina, and was determined to execute it without delay. When I ſaw her before me, the idea of that impreſſion revived which her preſence had created in me the firſt day I beheld her, and from that time my heart had thought her worthy of a better fortune, and now, that her fortune was in my hands, I looked upon her with more pleaſure, and ſhe was to me an object of tenderneſs, when another perhaps, in my circumſtances, would have viewed her with ſcorn and contempt. Come, my child, ſaid I, when ſhe was going to kneel at my feet, as uſual, come to the arms of one who is no longer a miſtreſs, but ſiſter: At theſe words the

poor girl blushed, and with the tears in her eyes, declared herself unworthy of such kindness: Yes, said I, you merit it, because you have a right to it by your birth, and from my equity: If heaven ordained you to be born great, I ought not to thwart its will, by triumphing over your ruin: You are no longer poor Rosalina, but the real Lady Marchioness of V——, and to you belongs not only that ground which you lately possessed, but likewise all that is within the jurisdiction of this castle; the inheritance is yours, but others usurped it, and I will have the glory to return it to you, for I scorn to be great by withholding the property of another. Here I repeated to her every circumstance, as I had it from the Abbot, and consigned to her the manuscript left by her ancestors, that she might peruse it herself. At this great and unexpected news she changed colour, looked round about her for some time, without answering one word, and had almost swooned away on my lap. When the confusion of her mind suffered her to speak, Is it possible, Madam, said she, that you can be generous to such a degree, and that fortune has this day put me in a state to shew the esteem I have

have for your virtue, by even excelling the example? If I am no longer Rosalina, but the Lady of V——, I have the pleasure in being such to love you with my whole heart. If this castle, and all appertaining to it, belong to me, I am pleased it came from your hands, as it enables me to give it back to you under title of a gift; from a soul so noble and generous as yours, I shall repute myself in an ample manner obliged; the heart you have had to serve me so much, to the prejudice of yourself, is an act so noble, that it ought not to pass without a recompence, and who can recompence it better than myself, by fixing on you, without loss to yourself, the glory of such a generous gift? Continue still to be the Lady of V——, remain as hitherto sole mistress of this castle, and still be mistress of my person; be not surprized at these my generous sentiments, which are almost superior to my low state; for, if one person's vicious example can have influence sufficient to corrupt and debauch, a virtuous one must surely have the same effect to a more laudable end: Even, of my virtue, all the merit is yours, because my soul was inspired with this greatness, by your glorious

example. Who can tell how I remained at theſe words; I bluſhed at her unparalled generoſity, and much doubted, had I been in the ſame ſituation as herſelf, whether I ſhould have been capable to have done the ſame. My admiration at length gave place to my tenderneſs; I embraced and kiſſed her with a tranſport of love, and from that moment, deſired her, together with her mother, to remove to my houſe, I ought rather to ſay hers; the poor old woman, being overcome with exceſſive joy, died in a few weeks after. In the mean while, to be grateful to Roſalina, it was proper I ſhould ſeek ſome method to ſettle her fortune for life. She was very deſirous of ſeeing the world, and would not ſeparate from me, in hopes that at ſome time or other I would take her with me to Paris: This, her deſire, was well approved of by my mother, when, by my letters, ſhe was exactly informed of all that had happened. I communicated to her my project of making her hereafter wife to my ſon, who was then but three years old, in order to unite together lawfully, in the children, the rights and title to my eſtate. My mother did not refuſe the project, but the inequa-

lity

lity of their age was her chief obſtacle, and how it may happen time only can determine.

My family was now increaſed one more; and my little daughter, who rendered it dearer and more delightful to me, grew up apace, and enjoyed, with good reaſon, the principal part of my tenderneſs. As I loved her, I deſired alſo that ſhe might appear amiable in the eyes of others; and to render her ſuch, it was my chief aim to have her well educated, for on this only depends her good appearance in the world hereafter: I took care to have her brought up under my own eyes, that none elſe might be anſwerable for it but myſelf. If a mother will have no regard for her children, what care can the nurſes have, who attend their charge only with a view to ſecure them from thoſe dangers into which their heedleſs and unexperienced age might ſeduce them? As ſhe grew up, I adapted to her capacity the rules of my own education, but ſhall not deſcend to the particularities of my maxims, becauſe I profeſs myſelf an hiſtorian, and not a ſchool-miſtreſs. Hitherto I have been quite contented with the fruits of my labour; but while I am

glorying in that content, fortune is preparing another of her extravagant croſſes, which we all one time or other muſt undergo.

Of all my other misfortunes, by force of philoſophical reflections, I ſoon loſt the remembrance, but this was a ſtroke of heaven, which I ſhall never forget, and at this day is fixed in my ſoul, tho' it is above three years ſince it happened, and coſt me ſo many floods of tears, I mean the loſs I then had of the moſt ſweet half of myſelf, that is, of the moſt amiable and affectionate of huſbands, plucked from me by death in the flower of his youth, and only four years after my nuptials. This loſs to me was ſo ſenſible, that the very thought of it pierces my heart; and they muſt have hearts of ſtone, who, in my circumſtances, could write upon ſuch a topic, without melting into tears. When my readers peruſe this part of my Memoirs, and find any of them cut ſhort, or clipt, becauſe dictated more by the heart, than by wit, and wrote rather with tears, than with ink, alas! for pity, I beſeech them not to deny me that only favour I ſue for, which is, that of forgiveneſs and compaſſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Illneſs of my Huſband, and Conſultation of the Doctors.

MY huſband returned one day from hunting with a violent pain in his head, which the next day produced a ſlight fever. The Abbot, who tenderly loved him, immediately adviſed him to put himſelf into the hands of a Doctor, that the diſorder, by being neglected, might not increaſe. My huſband, who had been uſed to the fatigues of war, and the hardſhips of campaigns, thanked him for his advice, but deſpiſed it as a ridiculous matter of form. I, who dreaded every thing, would fain have perſuaded him to keep in his bed, but he no ſooner found himſelf a little better, than he got up, which occaſioned a relapſe, and a fever more violent than at firſt, and my apprehenſions thereupon increaſed in proportion. The Abbot, without ſpeaking a word, acted like a real friend, by ſending to Naples for three of the moſt creditable doctors of that city, that they might conſult together about his illneſs. My huſband had conceived a great averſion to phyſic, though he eſteemed

teemed all those who professed that science. Moderation, and a proper regimen in his food, indulgence, and exercise, appeared to him the remedies most profitable to repair the disorders of nature, whose assistance regularly depends on the due observation of those very material points. These maxims were rooted so deeply in his soul, that on the first appearance of the three doctors in the room, he could not forbear laughing; his courage, and the despicable notion he had of life, were superior to his illness, and the weakness of nature; nevertheless he received them with that affability and politeness which always accompanied his other excellent qualities. I recommended him to their care in the most pressing manner, assuring them of my gratitude for the same; they promised me all that assistance which could be expected from their art and attention. Having seated themselves close to his bed-side, I was anxious to know the event of that learned meeting; first they must be informed minutely of the original of the illness, which was related to them exactly by the Abbot; then the first of them, to encourage us and the patient, gave an account, at his leisure, of three or four sick people whom he had

had under his hands, and hoped they would recover in a few days : This vain boasting answered but little to our purpose, tho' his hand had been well filled but a few moments before, as is usual to those of the profession ; but the second thought proper to interrupt him, by demanding what sort of food the patient eat on the preceeding days ; he was answered, that the patient had in general a good apetite, but that for these few days his food was nothing but some slices of bread in a mess of broth ; that's bad, replied the third, (who had not till then opened his mouth) We have the undoubted documents of Hypocrates, that every repleniſhing is hurtful to the stomach, but that of bread is always worse than all the rest : O ! with your good leave, added the first, that maxim is false, nor was it ever advanced by Hypocrates : I have seen a written codicil of that learned man's, and which is of great antiquity, wherein it is not written, as is generally supposed by the ignorant, *Omnis repletio mala, panis autem pessima* ; but you will find it repeated more than once, *Omnis nauseatio mala, panis autem pessima.* You see, Sir, that this is understanding the disease entirely the contrary

trary way, and consequently you must apply the medicines quite contrary also. If our patient took no other food but bread, and swallowed it without a desire to discharge it up again, it appears by Hypocrates that his illness is not so dangerous as you suppose; and from the nature of his food, I form an evident conjecture that he will recover very soon. Although my husband was much disordered by the violence of his fever, he could not help smiling at this discourse: I and the Abbot stood quite mute, but our doctors continued a good half hour arguing on this purpose, with Arabian, Greek, and Latin sentences, in proof of their opinions. Of the patient they thought no more, but treated him as if they had come to instruct him in physic, instead of using means for his recovery. In short, we were constrained civilly to desire them to resolve on what was to be done in that case; even here they had another consultation, and one of them, in feeling his pulse, spied the sign of a wound which he had received in his arm; they must then be acquainted of the time, occasion, and place, where he received it: This gave them an opportunity to discourse about the last war in Italy,

Italy, and they ſhewed themſelves not only to be excellent doctors, but alſo great politicians, remembering all the actions of thoſe campaigns, remarking on the experience of the generals, and valour of their troops, as if they had been ſoldiers by profeſſion, and had been preſent in every action. They arrived at laſt to the point moſt neceſſary, but moſt difficult to be decided; this was, to have blood drawn from the patient, in order to eradicate the diſorder which ſeemed to threaten his ſtomach; on this point they argued with great vehemence, and one of them, who ſpoke leſs than the others, inſiſted abſolutely that the vein ought to be opened; the other two mantained the contrary, and gave ſeveral plauſible reaſons for ſo doing; however, the plurality of votes won the cauſe, and after preſcribing ſome medicines, the doctors departed. Their remedies were applied according to direction, but were of no ſignification, for my huſband, from that very day, began to grow worſe, and to leave no remedy untried, we alſo got him blooded, but all was in vain, for, at the end of fifteen days, he was paſt all hopes of recovery. Who can imagine my agitation, deſpair, and grief? loſing a huſband, I loſt all that was delightful

lightful to me in this world; nor had I, in this my ſevere trial, a ſoul to comfort me but the Abbot, who was as much inconſoleable as myſelf. The heroic ſentiments which we were every moment witneſſes to, from the philoſophical undauntedneſs of my dear ſpouſe, ſerved only to torment me more: My exceſſive grief at that time muſt have been attended with conſequences fatal to my life, had it not been ordained by heaven that I was to outlive the moſt ſweet half of myſelf, to be for ever unhappy. The Abbot never departed from the bed-ſide, tho' my huſband begged of him to take a little repoſe. On theſe trying occaſions we diſcover our real friends, and few are thoſe friends in the world, who will be conſtant even till death, and ſtand by us when dying, unleſs ſome view to their own intereſt requires their attendance; but intereſted views had no ſhare in the ſoul of our worthy friend, and in three years, which he had lived with us, we had ſufficiently experienced it. My huſband was ſo perſuaded of this truth, that, even in his laſt moments, he would have eſteemed himſelf ingrateful, if, in dying, he had not thought of a man, who, for our ſakes, thought nothing of himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP: XXXVII.

Death of my Husband, and my own Illness.

THAT day, which was the last of his life, we were both, with tears in our eyes, sitting upon his bed: he took us both by the hands, with what little vigour then remained; — Dear Wife, dear Friend, do not cry, said he to us, if you would have me die content! — this miserable life has nothing for me delightful and precious, if it had not been rendered so by your friendship, and your person: my loss is great, in losing a spouse so amiable, and a friend so worthy; but yet, my loss may be recompensed by your love, if I may still live in your heart: of this I do not doubt and my confidence enables me undauntedly to meet death, which deprives me of nothing, if, by leaving me in your memory, it does not divide me from you: — remember me, for ever! — and love each other with that love which is founded in real merit, and on the strictest virtue: — To you, my amiable spouse, this

friend of mine will be helpful in your intereſts; and to you, my beloved friend, my ſpouſe can contribute towards the leading ſuch a life as you deſire, philoſophical, quiet, and contented: I do not think of placing you in a ſtate quite independent, becauſe I will not uſurp from my wife the glory ſhe takes in protecting virtue; my wife will never divide your fortune from hers, till ſhe ceaſes to love my memory; but as ſhe will love me for ever, as I yet hope, you will be always happy.

At theſe words the Abbot, overwhelmed with tears, embraced him tenderly, and proteſted that he would rather never have ſeen him, than loſe him ſo ſoon to his ſad misfortune; he even wiſhed that he could ſave his life, by laying down his own; and indeed if any one was, he was capable of that ſacrifice, for I never knew a perſon ſo regardleſs of their life, as himſelf. For my part, in theſe dreadful circumſtances I was ready to die with grief! I vowed inviolable fidelity to his bed; I called upon my head the vengeance of heaven, if ever I took back the gift I once made him of my amorous heart! I proteſted that, beſides my children, two dear pledges which remained of his love,

love, not a perſon in the whole world ſhould be dearer to me than his friend, whom he recommended to me with ſo much ardour; and that I ſhould always regard him as my own brother.

Between thoſe and the like tender expreſſions to each other, my dear ſpouſe expired! and I can truly ſay, that my grief roſe to ſuch a height, that I was almoſt in a condition to expire by his ſide. I ſhall not extend any further in drawing to life my diſmal ſituation, nor pierce again a wound which ſtill runs with blood, and at this moment coſts me a river of tears! My extream concern affected me ſo much, that I was confined to my bed for two months, and would certainly have carried me to my grave, if the continual preſence of my dear little girl, the aſſiſtance of Roſalina, and the wiſe reflections of the Abbot, had not kept up my ſpirits. My mother, ſtruck with exceſſive grief at the loſs of my huſband, almoſt loſt her ſenſes at the news of my illneſs: ſhe did not fly to Italy, becauſe I kept her in continual hopes of my recovery; and as ſoon as I recovered, ſhe deſired me at all events to bring the whole family to Paris, and not to depart from it ever more: but

this was a point on which we could not agree, and not to displease her, I must act with caution: the love of my mother and son, were two objects to my tender heart which might indeed encourage me to undertake that journey without fear; but yet, after my dismal loss, my melancholy humour, the noise of the world, dislike to the court, and application to study, gave the preference, in every respect, to my solitude.

To make my mother sensible of the reasonableness of this resolution, as many letters as would have filled an entire volume, would not have been enough: the only method I could find was to send Rosalina to Paris, as she had a desire to see her there; and to send with her for company the Abbot, whom I commissioned to persuade my mother to comply with my desires of staying a few years longer in Italy. Notwithstanding Rosalina desired to see the great world, and a court so magnificent as that of France, yet she left me with the tears streaming from her eyes, and I could not prevail upon her to depart, but by promising to follow her to Paris the next year. My intentions were different, but partly depended on the

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will of my mother : it belonged to the Abbot, my friend, to make her resolve in my favour: no age, no state, no character ought to make us forget the duty due to our parents: who, more than me, mistress of herself? because I, being married, being a widow, and afar off from my parents, required nothing at their hands to maintain me in a state suitable to my condition ; but even in the most trifling affairs, to displease them I thought was injustice, and less pleasure had I in every thing if not gained by their consent.

Rosalina, accompanied by the Abbot, departed from my house provided with all necessaries to appear at Versailles, and, at the end of two months, the Abbot returned with permission from my mother for me to stay in Italy, so long as I found my solitude agreeable. I then devoted my soul entirely to contemplations, the sole felicity which can be expected in this world, and which I now was blessed with by the company and conversation of a friend, united to me not by passion but by virtue. Many days had not passed when the Abbot advised me, for my entertainment, to write my own adventures, promising at the same time

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to give me all the assistance in his power to make my enterprize the lighter: thus, by his persuasions, I began six months after my husband's death to write these Memoirs, which to compleat employed me no less than six more. My undertaking was not little for a woman, I therefore flatter myself that it will be entitled to some praise: I do not presume to suppose that it merits eternity, or that it is worthy the curiosity of my posterity: the time spent in writing it was certainly not lost, because in renewing the memory of my misfortunes, it also renewed in me the maxims which made me undergo them with more constancy, and prepared me against all that might happen hereafter. This hour in which I write, and am upon the point of finishing my work, I am arrived to the thirtieth year of my age; and if I live many years longer, perhaps something else, as uncommon, may happen to me: if it should so fall out, I shall continue to take notice of the same, that after my death there may remain an exact account of my life.

Whatever is to be the remainder of my life, I have not wrote these Memoirs to obtain the praise of the world by pub-

publiſhing them, neither have I wrote them to loſe my labour by committing them to the flames: my intention is humourous, but yet reaſonable; before I die, I ſhall bury it, and hide it in that cloſet from which I dug out the antient Journals of my family, and which, in regard to myſelf, may be called, The CLOSET of my DECEIT; and altho' before this comes to light, the Adventures of the Wandering Daughter, which were wrote to diſhonour my name, may be publiſhed to all the world, and will, I am perſuaded, be believed by many to be the real hiſtory of my life, as it happens to contain a few particulars which reſemble ſome of my adventures; and although I am ſenſible that the conceit which they muſt form of me, by ſuch a book, cannot redound to my credit; yet, I make no doubt but a time will come to diſcover the deceit: and if theſe my Memoirs, drawn by ſome friendly hand from their obſcurity, ſhould hereafter appear in public, I hope I ſhall have juſtice done me. That was a romance very unprofitable, and this is a true hiſtory founded on facts. It is not I who have copied from that the ideal foundation of theſe adventures; but the author of that has,

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from some confused account of my life, taken the idea of a romance, the end of which does not correspond with the beginning, and has mixed with some truth a hundred thousand lies. Therefore if these Memoirs should ever come before the eyes of the public, I hope they will not deny me that only glory, which I earnestly desire, to be believed a Speaker of Truth. Where justice would not allow it, I have not in the least excused my fault; and this will be enough, with all discreet and reasonable people, to obtain for me, in all my failings, their generous pardon.

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